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The Shape of Things

THE PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN Finland and the U. S. S. R. have come to naught, and the Finnish delegation has left Moscow. It is possible that some further attempt to reach agreement may be made through diplomatic channels, and at the moment the use by Russia of military methods to enforce its demands is considered unlikely. The Soviet press, however, continues to use aggressive language against those wicked recalcitrants, the Finns, who threaten to defend themselves if attacked. Unfortunately for the latter, Russia can keep up an almost intolerable pressure without firing a shot, for mobilization involves enormous expense for Finland at a time when its economy is already badly dislocated by the effects of the war on its trade. How far Finland has been prepared to meet Soviet terms is not yet known. A new version of these terms, printed in the organ of the red navy, indicates that the acquisition of a base at Hangö on the Finnish mainland is still among the chief Russian aims. Other "indispensable" demands include the fortification of a number of islands in the Gulf of Finland and frontier rectifications in the Far North which would, apparently, make over Petsamo, Finland's one Arctic port, to Russia. The narrow strip of territory which gives Finland access to the northern ocean was conceded by the Treaty of Dorpat in 1930. In return Russia retained the large district of Eastern Karelia, the inhabitants of which are of Finnish stock. Since then a motor road has been built to Petsamo, and with the discovery of rich nickel deposits in the vicinity the Finns had planned to develop the port as an outlet for their backward northern provinces.

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THE BOMB IN THE BUERGERBRAU HAS SET OFF a spate of theories about its origin, the least credible, perhaps, being the official Nazi one that it was placed there by the long arm of the British secret service. This suggestion pays high tribute to the ingenuity of Britain, whose agents could hardly have accomplished the deed without infiltration into the ranks of Hitler's Praetorian Guard. But it does scant justice to British policy-makers, who are intelligent enough to see that an attempt, successful or unsuccessful, to blow up Hitler would be more likely to rally the Germans to support of the Nazi regime than to promote rebellion. British war propaganda has been directed toward undermining loyalty to Hitler and keeping the blood pressure of the German people low. The Nazis, on the other hand, since their peace offensive broke down, have been attempting to rouse opinion to a fighting pitch that would provide moral backing for *Blitzkrieg* methods. Former attempts on Hitler's life have been hushed up as far as possible, but the Munich bomb is being capitalized for all it is worth. Such tactics lend color to the theory, equally unproved, that this is another Reichstag fire. As every good detective knows, the hardened criminal has a strong tendency to repeat himself. Hitler ascribes his escape to luck, but we cannot help wondering whether there was not something a little more deliberate about the last-minute change of plan which caused him and all the other important officials present to leave the fateful beer hall just in time. In any event, it is strange that the ubiquitous Gestapo slipped up on this occasion. If the plot was a genuine attempt at assassination, some determined opposition must be boring from within this all-powerful body.

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THE ACTION OF BRITAIN AND FRANCE IN withdrawing the greater part of their armed forces from North China is clearly a bid for a settlement of outstanding issues with Japan. While the combined forces of the two powers were so small as to be useless in the face of a Japanese attack on the Tientsin concession, their removal makes impossible even such a defense of foreign rights as the British undertook last summer. So far there is no evidence that a general agreement has been reached between Japan and the Allied powers. But the willingness of Britain and France to surrender their positions in advance of an agreement indicates that they have no compunction about leaving China in the lurch. The withdrawal of their support would place a heavy responsibility on the United States. Our position in the Pacific has been complicated by recent Japanese threats against the Netherlands Indies. In deciding whether or not to impose an embargo on trade with Japan, the next Congress will determine whether Japan can carry out further expansionist activities. For with war in Europe, Japan has become more than ever dependent on American material assistance.

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CALIFORNIA HAS AGAIN REJECTED "HAM and Eggs" and this time by a far more decisive majority. In fact, the final vote in its favor seems likely to be below that polled a year ago, despite the tremendous campaign conducted by its promoters and changes made in the constitutional amendment to provide a bait for previously hostile groups. In the general press the result is being hailed as a blow to socialism and a return to economic conservatism. It seems to us rather a vindication of democracy and a rebuff for the smug gentlemen who are so fond of explaining that the common people cannot be trusted to decide issues which involve the distribution of public funds. California voters have clearly not been deceived by the spurious economics of the Ham and Eggers, while they appear to have been outraged by the fascist blueprint which the amendment provided. In Ohio a constitutional amendment to give pensions of $50 a month to persons of sixty was also overwhelmingly defeated. This measure appears to have been extremely badly drafted, but it is hardly fair to bracket it with the "thirty-Thursday" fantasy. A similar proposal has now been brought forward by Governor Olson in California. Considering our potential capacity to produce wealth, it ought not to be impossible to provide pensions on such a scale for people of sixty who wish, or are forced, to retire but have little means. Until we contrive better security for old age than we have devised hitherto, we can be sure there will be no lack of promoters, honest and dishonest, seeking to canalize the discontents of our growing army of old people.

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IN GENERAL, LAST WEEK'S ELECTIONS WERE about as meaningful to political analysts as a Gallup poll of the deserted village. The contests were fragmentary and isolated and the issues predominantly local. While the defeat of the pension movements got the most favorable press notices, several other contests in which labor had a direct stake deserve honorable mention. The defeat of Mayor Richard W. Reading in Detroit was especially noteworthy. He had sought reelection on a clear-cut program: he was anti-labor. His chief slogan was "Defeat communism and the C. I. O."—and in Detroit the C. I. O. is the labor movement. His propaganda was entirely reminiscent of his 1937 campaign when he rode into office amid the frantic anti-labor hysteria which followed the sitdown strikes. Last week he was ushered out of office by an overwhelmingly pro-labor vote. His successor, Edward J. Jeffries, Jr., was not a devout labor spokesman, as the conservative press alleged during the campaign, but neither is his election without significance, as the conservative press argued the day after the election. In fact it was a measure of labor's comeback in Detroit, and the new mayor has pledged to rid the city of its notoriously reactionary police commissioner. In Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Mayor Daniel Shields was similarly relieved of his duties. Shields had served the steel interests faithfully; the La Follette committee disclosed that he received a $25,000 reward for his services in the struggle against the S. W. O. C. Last week Mr. Shields's bid for reelection was rejected after a campaign in which his behavior in the steel strike was the central issue. In both these elections labor hated the incumbent more than it loved his successor. More dramatic was the vote in Massillon, Ohio, where a steel worker was elected mayor.

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JUDGING FROM THE TERMS OF THE VINSON bill, the current war will certainly make the world safe for armorplate manufacturers and shipbuilders. Drawn up in collaboration with the Navy Department and bearing the approval of the President, the bill authorizes another $1,300,000,000 in naval construction. The next session of Congress will be asked, in addition, to appropriate some $900,000,000 for the navy during the coming fiscal year. Mr. Vinson asserts that these expenditures, enormous as they may seem, will be sufficient only for an "any-one-aggressor" navy but not for a "two-ocean" navy. The terms of the Vinson bill are made to order for the armament profiteer. The Secretary of the Navy may waive competitive bidding. He may also lend up to 30 per cent of the value of the contract at low interest rates to the shipbuilder. Since the bill specifically leaves in force an "Act Authorizing the Secretary of the Navy to Make Partial Payments for Work Already Done Under Public Contracts," it will be possible for the contractor to operate on public funds by alternate loans and partial payments while the work is in progress. Why hand out fat profits to steel and shipbuilding patrioteers under these conditions? If we must spend all this money, why not keep the cost down by using government yards, and building more government yards if necessary?

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EMPLOYMENT IN INDUSTRY HAS INCREASED by 1,250,000 since this time a year ago, according to an estimate just released by Secretary Perkins. This represents a distinct improvement, but hardly as much as might be expected from the fact that the Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial production has risen from 96 to 120 in the interval. Nor, thanks to the action of the "economy" bloc in Congress, has it resulted in a reduction in unemployment. Offsetting the increase in industrial employment has been a 1,500,000 decline in the number of WPA jobs and a 600,000 increase in the number of persons of working age. So while the war boom has played into the reactionaries' hands by seeming to justify the relief cuts, it finds us no farther along with the essential task of raising the buying power of the underprivileged.

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LAST WEEK THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY Corporation rescinded its permission for a student meeting at which Earl Browder was to speak. It did so with the explanation that his indictment for a passport violation had made him unfit for a Harvard platform. Three days later a mob of legionnaires and assorted thugs descended on a Detroit meeting-hall where Communist leader William Z. Foster was delivering an address. They picketed boisterously, and when the meeting ended and the crowd began to disperse, they went into action. They created a tumultous riot, inflicted injuries on nearly fifty people who had attended the meeting, and went home singing the Star-Spangled Banner. The two incidents are widely separated in space and in degree; yet both are part of the pattern of hysteria being woven around us. The vigilante attack on a minority speaker is not without precedent in Detroit; Harvard's ban on a minority speaker is a new departure in Cambridge. But the most startling aspect of Harvard's decision is the frailty of its excuse. Browder has been indicted but has not been convicted, and it is still American doctrine that a man is innocent until proved guilty. The reverse assumption is as alien to basic American concepts as the wanton attack on the participants in the Foster meeting. The most refreshing contrast to this Cambridge ban is the editorial criticism leveled by the Harvard *Crimson* against the university authorities. What the Communists say these days will probably win them few converts. But the kind of intolerance to which Harvard has given academic sanction can develop into something ugly and uncontrollable. It did in Detroit.

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IN SPAIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SEEMS TO have leaped from the Republican frying-pan into the Falangist fire. The church complained because the republic, under the constitution of 1931, separated church and state and therefore no longer paid the salaries of the clergy. The church was pleased, on the other hand—though it kept quiet about it—because the republic did not seek to appoint the bishops, as the Spanish monarchy had done for centuries. Now Franco, restoring the union of church and state, has appropriated 60,000,000 pesetas to pay church salaries and expenses. But the church is complaining because Franco is also insisting on the right to appoint the bishops. He not only wants to appoint the bishops, as Alfonso and his royal predecessors did, but he is also determined to expel one cardinal and several bishops from Spain on the ground that they are hostile to the Falangists and refused to sign the pastoral letter in support of Franco during the civil war. The cardinal is Vidal y Barraquer, and one of the bishops is the Archbishop of Vitoria in the strongly republican Basque territory. Certain American Catholic apologists for Franco have double reason to blush: because so many of them denied that certain members of the Spanish hierarchy were hostile to Franco; and because, after all their explanations that Franco was not a fascist, the Spanish dictator seeks to expel high churchmen who dislike the fascist Falange. The Falangists have strongly anticlerical tendencies and may yet make the church regret the overthrow of the republic.

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THE CHURCH'S NEW TROUBLES IN SPAIN should warn it to leave well enough alone in the United States, where Roman Catholicism has flourished under separation of church and state. The Pope's encyclical on the 150th anniversary of the Catholic hierarchy in this country lays the Vatican open to the charge of an uncalled-for interference in American affairs. His Holiness's criticism of American education is a reflection of the Roman church's old opposition to the secular school. The ignorance and backwardness of the masses in countries like Spain and Mexico, where the church long controlled education, is sufficient answer. What the Pope calls our "narrow . . . materialism or . . . rationalism" compares favorably with the bigotry instilled and the superstition bred where the church has controlled the school. Secular education is but one aspect of separation of church and state; separation of church and state is basic American doctrine. The Pope would be better advised to rebuke the Coughlins and the Christian Fronters who are beginning to associate the church here as in Spain with reaction. Though they spread doctrines the Pope has condemned, he offers no criticism of their activities but commends those using the radio to spread Catholic ideas. Only last week the Coughlinites held a pro-fascist, anti-Semitic rally in a Pawtucket, Rhode Island auditorium; the intolerance was so extreme that one of the guest speakers later denounced the meeting. The encyclical celebrated the consecration of the first American bishop, John Carroll of Maryland. Maryland's greatest glory was its establishment of religious toleration in the New World.

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EVER BEEN TO THE BAR OF HISTORY? IT'S right next to the bar of public opinion; neither of them observes closing hours; and both are always full of celebrities. "It must be remembered," said Wedgewood Benn, for instance, the other day, "that we stand at the bar of public opinion. . . ." Prime Minister Chamberlain said not so long ago, in speaking of the "Blue Book," "We shall stand at the bar of history. . . ." This is also the bar where Hitler gets the power he's drunk with. We're told that in Europe whenever a politician isn't in, his secretary says he's just stepped out to the bar of history. The place is getting too crowded and noisy for our taste, and besides there's no place to put your foot.

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Dictator's Dilemma

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

WISDOM lies with those who not only refuse to prophesy the next moves in Europe but also forswear the more Talmudic sorts of interpretation. A reading of the morning newspaper is enough to convince one of this. The myriad minute though fateful possibilities, spun out, set side by side, and examined through a mental microscope, are guaranteed to reduce the reader to confusion if he had any idea what it was all about when he started, or to leave him just where he was if he took confusion as a starting-point.

The Germans will go into Holland unless they decide that going into Holland entails more risks than advantages. The Russians will not move on Finland unless they decide that diplomatic pressure can no longer be effectively applied. Did Molotov's and Dimitrov's speeches mean what they seemed to mean? Well, maybe they did; in which case Hitler will either be used as a poker to rake out Russia's other European chestnuts or will have to accept bolshevism. And maybe they didn't, but on the contrary merely served as a red herring dragged across the ideological map of Europe to turn the people against the war and their governments.

At this moment of writing, events are suspended like swords, and any one or two of them may suddenly drop into the body of Europe. Belgium and Holland are earnestly assuring the world of their sense of security, while their Foreign Ministers meet at the border to discuss preparations for the joint defense of the Low Countries, and it is rumored that an attack on either will be regarded as a breach of the neutrality of both. Berlin continues to deny any intentions against any neutral, but newspapermen found officials a little hazy about just what sort of provocation might justify an attack. The hour of decision, it seems, cannot be very long delayed now that Britain and France have flatly and in two or three different forms turned down the desperate, defensive appeal for peace of Wilhelmina and Leopold. Churchill's radio talk set up barricades across every possible avenue of diplomatic retreat. It was a fighting speech, and it leaves Hitler, I should think, no further alternative to the attack he has so desperately hoped to avoid. President Lebrun was less pugnacious but even more explicit. He set the restoration of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland as minimum peace terms. Since to accept these would spell utter defeat for Hitler, Lebrun's words meant much the same thing as Churchill's.

Theoretically, the war should now start. But will it? Diplomacy is the art of reeling and writhing carried to its most highly convoluted point; and it may be that some new intervention or invention will postpone Hitler's need of decision. I confess that I don't see where it can come from. Italy is impotent. It fears war fully as much as Germany, but it has no bargaining power, no leverage. When the Pope spoke his word for peace, it was evident that he phrased it deliberately to give no encouragement to the German-Russian murder of pious Poland. The Scandinavian countries want peace too, but they cannot officially back a peace move that would leave Hitler with his loot and his power intact.

If the shooting does start, it must, most observers believe, start in the west. Almost the whole German army is behind the Westwall and along the Belgian-Holland frontier. The presumption is that Hitler will move fast and try to direct a very delayed *Blitzkrieg* against or around the western defenses. If it were not for concrete evidences of imminent action in that sector, I should doubt a westward drive. Not only is the season against it, but Hitler has so far failed to apply in full force the sorts of pressure with which he usually lays the ground for conquest. It may be said that he could have no hope of intimidating Holland into granting naval or air bases on its coasts or islands; Britain would not let it yield if it wanted to. But the chance of success might not be a determining factor; Hitler uses these diplomatic offensives chiefly as a means of building up a case. When his "moderate" and "reasonable" requests are turned down he can charge that the government under attack has become a segment in Germany's encirclement and even a potential aggressor. But so far we have heard of no Dutch or Belgian atrocities against German citizens, no violations of the border; and so far Hitler has made no drastic demands or open threats against his small neighbors. Perhaps the exigencies of war may force him to act without observing these time-honored preliminaries, or perhaps the prelude will be speeded up and crowded into a few days or hours. But Hitler would, I think, hate to start an attack without going through the form of establishing his innocence in advance. In addition to all these circumstances, the Allied armies are ready and waiting.

Circumstances would seem to suggest a drive—diplomatic or military—into the east. There no major force would oppose a joint attack by Russia and Germany. If they know how to divide the spoils and the influence, nothing could prevent them from taking what they want; the proposed Balkan bloc has not yet jelled, Turkish-Italian relations are still uncertain, the Western Allies are too far away to be of use in an emergency. The only apparent obstacle to such a move is the probability that Russia has marked out the territory for its own and would discourage Nazi penetration. The Comintern manifesto said that Soviet policy "hinders the provocateurs of war from drawing into it the Danube states and the Balkan countries," and since Germany was listed among those responsible for the present war, it may also be among those destined to be "hindered."

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If this is the case it would explain Hitler's apparent plight: his unhappy choice of either going west or sitting tight. The three important statements of Soviet attitude during the last week—Molotov's speech, Dimitrov's speech, and the Comintern manifesto—at least indicated Russia's determination to play its own game in Eastern Europe, however enthusiastically it may back Germany in the west. That these pronouncements also gave notice of a coming Socialist revolution may be doubted. Again one would do well to forswear the enticing sport of analyzing phrases and look at Russian policy in the large. Talk of revolution and revolutionary propaganda are good diplomatic strategy. At home they encourage loyalty and popular support for Russia's forays among its neighbors. In the depressed areas of the Balkans they serve as a useful ferment, producing a mood of discontent that is the only basis on which Russia can expand "peacefully." In the western countries they play directly into Hitler's hands by encouraging peace sentiment based on fear of "bolshevism." To believe the new protestations of revolutionary zeal is to believe that throughout the past five years Soviet Russia has been a revolutionary government instead of a rising world power, that its support of and collaboration with the democratic powers were all a sham, and that its growing nationalism was a false front to deceive the world. I prefer to believe that it has been moving away from its revolutionary internationalism toward a strongly nationalist state capitalism, and that today all talk of the first is designed to fortify and enhance the latter. The fate of Finland may serve to confirm or dispute this belief.

The Question of Flags

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S action in holding up the registration of American ships under the flag of Panama has temporarily quieted Washington's latest tempest in a teapot. As in last summer's storm over the sale of American airplanes to France, the disturbance was largely inspired by political considerations quite apart from the main issue. Republicans and isolationists were quick to see in the proposal an opportunity to embarrass the Administration. But in this instance the opposition was not wholly political. Secretary Hull and Sol Bloom, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, added their weight to those who criticized the proposed transfer as contrary to the spirit of the Neutrality Act. And the National Maritime Union opposed the plan on the ground that it would be injurious to American seamen.

On the surface, the scheme looked like a rather crude subterfuge. This impression was accentuated by its unfortunate timing. Twenty-four hours after the President had signed the Neutrality Act barring American shipping from European waters, it was announced that the shipping lines intended to continue service under another flag. To the average person this seemed like a deliberate violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the law, and as such a threat to American neutrality. Had the proposal been made before the passage of the act, or some weeks hence, it would scarcely have received this interpretation. It would have been looked upon as a natural step in compliance with the act. The ban on American shipping entering combat zones was not placed in the act in order to embarrass American shipping companies, or to hinder shipments to the Allies. Its sole purpose was to prevent diplomatic controversies from arising over incidents involving the American flag. The now celebrated City of Flint case demonstrated the wisdom of such restrictions. The danger of controversies developing would be obviated if the title of the ships were transferred to a foreign concern. It is true that the ships might be sunk by German submarines, or they might be captured by the British. The American stockholders of the Panama corporation holding title to the ships might be angered in either eventuality. But the United States government would have no legal interest in the affair and no grounds upon which to file a claim.

The seamen's objection to the transfer deserves more careful consideration. While they could be no better off with the ships lying idle than they would be if service were resumed with foreign crews, they have every right to insist that their future is quite as important as that of the ships. They are probably right in feeling that their chances for reemployment are better if the ships are not taken away from them, and in fearing that the employment of low-cost foreign crews would injure their chances of reemployment after the war.

The President has handled the situation about as well as was possible under the circumstances. Since it is unlikely that many of the ships can be absorbed in non-European trade, some provision obviously has to be made. No useful purpose would be served by keeping them idle. In seeking the outright sale of the ships rather than permitting a nominal transfer of title, Mr. Roosevelt has protected the shipping lines against charges of subterfuge. It is no more unneutral to sell ships than it is to sell automobiles or any other type of goods. Moreover, the President has pledged himself to immediate action to aid the stranded seamen. The program he outlines for this purpose is scarcely an adequate one, but it is at least a recognition of a responsibility that has been too lightly held until now. More, clearly, needs to be done. There is no reason why a few thousand seamen should be asked to bear the full cost of an act which can best be interpreted as insurance against our being involved in the European war. The President would be wholly justified in going before Congress with a request for a special works project which would employ all the seamen at full wages for the duration of their enforced unemployment.

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Free Trade in Ideas

THE articles by Max Lerner on Propaganda's Golden Age, in two previous issues, force us to make a confession. Liberals—even liberals of the left—have a conservative streak. In economics we long ago abandoned laissez faire. But in the political economy of ideas we are still followers of Adam Smith. We have a stubborn faith in the ability of the true to compete successfully with the false in the intellectual market place. We recognize that a worker's "liberty of contract" may only be a liberty to starve. We understand that the rough justice of *caveat emptor* serves adequately when two peasants haggle over a pig but not when a gentleman in a piped vest sells a lady in a black veil Class B convertible debentures. We do not believe that the right to eat by candlelight is adequate safeguard against exorbitant electric rates. Or that competition is free when a great oil company may undersell independents in one area and overcharge consumers in another. Here we have learned, as Lerner puts it, that "freedom is not laissez faire," which is another way of saying that there can be no liberty without some restraint. Nevertheless, we shy at his suggestion that these principles should be applied to the world of ideas. Lerner speaks in terms of a "Pure Food and Drugs Act" to label our intellectual patent medicines, government subsidies to help clear our journalistic slums, a "TVA yardstick" to measure the fairness and truthfulness of privately owned press and radio.

But his proposals would be more convincing if their counterparts were more successful. The "Truth in Securities" Act is still a long way from establishing truth in securities. Pure-food-and-drug legislation is little more than lip-service and label by the time it gets by the lobbies. Anti-trust legislation has affected the forms but not the realities and growth of American big business. It may well be doubted that the "total effect" of regulatory legislation "has been on the whole to carry through the original legislative intentions." In the field of regulation the regulated have usually been able in the long run to control the regulators. Is there good reason to believe that the effect would be different in the sphere of information and ideas? Lerner cites the Federal Theater Project as an example; we can cite in rebuttal the success of reactionary pressure groups in wrecking it. Lerner thinks an RFC might finance enterprises in the realm of information and ideas. Imagine a Jesse Jones lending money to a socially conscious newspaper!

But it is easier to find fault with Lerner's specific remedies than to deal with the problem he has been courageous enough to tackle. It is good to be reminded that liberals, too, have their "dogmas," and that "freedom of the press" is the privilege of the few in an age when a million dollars is small change in big-city journalism. "My freedom to start a newspaper in competition with him [Roy Howard]," Lerner writes, "is as real as my freedom to enter the field against the United States Steel Corporation." The obverse is the growing manufacture of opinion by United States Steel corporations. Added is the problem of the new techniques for skilfully poisoning ideas. We agree with Lerner that it may be folly to rely solely on "the doctrine of the final triumph of the idea" for our safety, but for the moment we see no safe substitute. The problem is one facet of the main problem of capitalism in its monopoly phase, but it would be lazy to put it down to "the system" and let it go at that. Though we fear Lerner's proposals, we do not think that we are condemned to inaction. Our own preferences in remedies run in a different direction. Is there any reason why we cannot legislate against chain publishing as we do against chain banking? Must distribution outlets remain concentrated in the hands of one or two great companies which can refuse to handle independent or radical publications—and often have? Can't we have safeguards against "unfair competition" and the vertical trust in publishing? We are indebted to Lerner for illuminating and opening up a subject of major importance. We should like to hear what our readers think.

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Politics and the C. I. O.

BY HERBERT HARRIS

AS A prophet and seer Homer Martin—along with other C. I. O. adversaries—is in the same class as Evangeline Adams. "There are some liberals in this country," he affirmed on October 12, at the A. F. of L. convention in Cincinnati, "who still believe that the leader of the C. I. O. will disgorge, get rid of the Communists. . . . There is no hope that he will ever seriously try to get rid of them—no more than that Hitler can get Stalin out of Poland." Yet three days before Martin made this prediction the Executive Board of the C. I. O., which was holding a few sessions of its own prior to the San Francisco convention, had already taken steps that were to shatter his crystal ball and whisk his turban into a corner.

Bright and early on the morning of October 9 Harry Bridges, leader of the C. I. O. Longshoremen and intimately identified in the public mind with the Communist Party line, was having a very uncomfortable time of it with John L. Lewis in the latter's hotel room. Upon hearing that the C. I. O. planned to enlarge the number of its vice-presidents from two to six, Bridges visited Lewis to plead his own cause for a place on this slate and to ask Lewis's support of his nomination.

"No," said Lewis.

"Then how about Joe Curran?" asked Bridges, naming the able head of the C. I. O. Maritime Union, who also has been frequently cited as a defender of Communist policies.

"No," said Lewis.

"Then how about—?" But the question, it is told in Gath, hung suspended in mid-air. Lewis's third "No" was even more final and emphatic, in its implications, than the two preceding. And this refusal of the C. I. O. chieftain to play ball with elements tarred by the Stalinist brush was the first official portent of quiet, behind-the-scenes changes that are still going on within the C. I. O. They are crucial changes, for all their lack of fanfare. They are designed to accomplish a single purpose: to eliminate Communist influence in the C. I. O., and to do it the hard way, without benefit of steam-roller, by means of a weeding-out technique consonant with the democratic process.

In dealing with this issue the C. I. O. top leadership—Lewis, Hillman, and Murray—faced a dilemma. If they raised a hue and cry over a "Communists must go" campaign they would merely add another voice to the red-scare chorus that follows each fresh disclosure of Martin Dies. On the one hand, their problem was to formulate tactics which would evade the evils of a witch-hunt, with its propensity to extend to liberals and laborites. On the other hand, they had to remove carefully the last vestiges of Communist intrenchment without wrecking various unions in which the party exercised a greater or less degree of control. In moving toward this dual objective they have so far not only displayed an impressive amount of ingenuity and common sense but also punctured the widely fostered illusion that the Communists are so sagacious politically that they simply can't be outsmarted.

Moreover, the entire procedure has been, and remains, in strict accordance with the powers voted to C. I. O. officers under the C. I. O. constitution, and would gratify the last stickler for legalistic proprieties. In this very situation, of course, resides a special irony. The extremely centralized authority enjoyed by the C. I. O. high command is in part the result of the pressure for concentrated control exerted by the Stalinists, to the end that with relatively few persons in key spots they might exercise an influence disproportionate to their numerical strength. Thus they had helped to forge the instrument for their own excision.

Despite Harry Bridges's personal plea for recognition, he was not elevated to the vice-presidency he sought. He was in fact demoted, with a few face-saving remarks, from his job as West Coast director and confined to California. The C. I. O. leadership, however, remained acutely aware that the deportation proceedings brought against Bridges stemmed from the ulterior motives of reactionary employers who wanted to banish him, not because he was an alien, or even because he preached the class struggle, but fundamentally because he had been an effective union leader along the Embarcadero and points north and south. For this reason the resolution pledging aid to Bridges in his resistance to his threatened exclusion from the United States received the genuine support of the entire roster of 385 delegates to the convention.

But no such proffer of aid and comfort cushioned John Brophy's slide down the chute from the limelight to oblivion. From directing national organization for the C. I. O. he has been relegated to the comparatively paltry task of supervising the formation of industrial-union locals in secondary areas. In Brophy's shoes at Washington headquarters stands Alan Haywood, former C. I. O. regional director for New York, where he waged an astute fight against Communist encroachments in the metropolitan area. In his new post he is expected to make good along the same lines on a national scale. Replacing

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Haywood in New York State is Adolph Germer, intimate of Eugene Debs and lifelong apostle of industrial unionism. The Communists regard him with the same degree of affection that big California fruit-growers feel for John Steinbeck.

As C. I. O. regional director for Michigan, Germer was primarily responsible for reducing to official impotence such Stalinists as Wyndham Mortimer, former vice-president of the Automobile Workers. In many respects Germer's appointment is the most significant shift in all the current reshufflings of C. I. O. personnel. While he is nominally in charge of the C. I. O. for the entire state, he is going to concentrate his efforts upon New York City, which, except for white-collar workers, is pretty thoroughly unionized. He does not intend to do much about the C. I. O.'s campaign in the construction industry, which started as a dud and will end as a minor disaster, if only because the A. F. of L. building-trades unions have a collective treasury of $40,000,000 and long traditions of toughness with which to combat C. I. O. competition. Germer's experience has been largely limited to coal, where years ago he bucked Lewis in Illinois, and to motors, where he bucked Charles Coughlin, Homer Martin, and G. K. Gebert, and more than any other man salvaged the wreckage of the internal wars of the Automobile Workers. At fifty-five he is a cherubic-looking giant of a man, with a background of thirty-five years of "knowing everybody" in the labor movement. It is not only for organizing purposes that he is making his headquarters in Manhattan. Actually he is tackling the hardest job in his career—that of spiking Communist Party influence at its source and fountainhead.

Drawing by Dolbin

Harry Bridges

Yet all this is merely part of the effort to rout out any Stalinist pattern from the C. I. O. picture. Three of the four new vice-presidents elected at the San Francisco convention—Emil Rieve of the Textile Workers' Union, R. J. Thomas of the Automobile Workers, and Sherman H. Dalrymple of the Rubber Workers—have displayed a pronounced anti-Stalinist bias. The fourth new vice-president, Reid Robinson of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, was selected with the idea that the prestige and authority of his new position would assist him in his present efforts to break with the Stalinist group within his own union and checkmate their maneuvers. Similarly James Carey of the Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers, who was renamed secretary of the C. I. O., the only elected officer to get a salary from the organization as a whole, was assigned chores that will enable Lewis to keep a watchful eye on him and to build a *cordon sanitaire* between Carey and Stalinist advisers.

Of course Hillman and Murray, each of whom brings to his C. I. O. office an influence rarely associated with the office of vice-president, have been urging Lewis to jettison the Communist cargo for the past eighteen months. And when it was decided that the deed had to be done, it was their temperamental devotion to cool, calm, and collected methods that hindered the use of a more drastic and spectacular technique of ouster. At a special meeting of the Executive Board Lewis warned that no dual allegiance would be tolerated. He told his hearers that anyone who by any action indicated that he subordinated the welfare of the C. I. O. to the interests of the Communist Party could consider himself already on the skids. He promised that he personally would put his "oar in"—appeal to the rank and file of any union—if signs of Stalinist "strategy" appeared. Hence the remaining Stalinists within the C. I. O.—there have been of course quite a few voluntary defections because of the Hitler-Stalin pact—are all on precarious probation. For people such as Ben Gold of the Furriers, for example, even this period of grace may be shortened.

OLIVE BRANCH TO THE A. F. OF L.

Coincident with the decision to break the back of Communist penetration if it takes all this summer and the next, is another shift in C. I. O. policy, one that will be even more important in the long run. John L. Lewis's attitude toward peace with the A. F. of L. has been modified from an almost implacable opposition to an at least passive acceptance of the thesis that labor unity is the need of the hour. In many quarters it is believed that his offer to resign as head of the C. I. O. was less the histrionics of a master showman designed to keep dissidents in line than the expression of a recently acquired view that he himself was the great stumbling-block to peace.

In any event the C. I. O. Negotiating Committee, comprising Lewis, Hillman, and Murray, will definitely resume truce talks with the A. F. of L. early next year. Hillman and Murray, who are to carry the brunt of the harmony conferences, with Lewis remaining in the background, have been granted broad discretionary powers. Yet it is too early to put up the banns. What the whole thing boils down to is that Lewis, who as late as last month said that "evil conditions" within the A. F. of L. made peace impossible, has been apparently persuaded by his chief lieutenants to extend the olive branch—at least tentatively. It remains a moot point, however, whether it was the eloquence of his advisers or the steady

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upward trend of business activity in the mass-production industries which produced the Lewis change of front. Coal, steel, motors, men's wear, textiles, glass, oil, cement, food processing—industries in which the C. I. O. has the bulk of its actual or potential strength—are all beginning to hum, and with the lifting of the arms embargo a war boom may hit a terrific stride, at least for a while. Employment in sectors of C. I. O. unionism may therefore be expected to rise rapidly, despite the technological improvements which in the past year alone have greatly reduced the available number of jobs, notably in steel.

It will be recalled that last spring peace negotiations collapsed when the A. F. of L. proposed that impartial accountants audit the books of both the federation and the C. I. O. as a preface to representation in any united body—a representation to be based primarily upon the dues-paying members possessed by both sides. At that time Lewis knew that while the C. I. O. had plenty of adherents, all too many of them were on the debit side of the ledger. They were listed all right—name and address and original union card all complete—but tens of thousands of them were behind in their dues, partly because some of the newer unions hadn't acquired the dues-paying habit, partly because Stalinist disruption or domination had caused the withdrawal of important affiliates, such as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, but basically because unemployment in mass-production industries had forced thousands of C. I. O. unionists on relief. By the turn of the year, if business continues to pick up, Lewis will be in a far stronger bargaining position and better equipped to meet the A. F. of L. on the latter's own terms. When automobile plants, for instance, notch up their production schedules toward practical capacity, thousands of men are put back to work at one clip—just as quickly as they were laid off in slack time. The mass-production worker, however, generally finds it harder to get a "fill-in" job than does the A. F. of L. craftsman. One reason among many is that WPA and PWA funds are so largely spent in the construction of parks, roads, and buildings, in which many A. F. of L. skills are needed even if only on a part-time basis.

Certainly the C. I. O. treasury during the past three years has reliably mirrored the ups and downs of the American mass-production cycle. The C. I. O. treasury has also been watched carefully by the A. F. of L. and has been a determining factor in how far the latter was willing to go in concessions making for peace. In the spring of 1937, for example, before the recession set in, when the C. I. O. was on the crest of the wave, when Lewis and the Miners were putting $1,000,000 into organizing steel, when Hillman and the Amalgamated were throwing $800,000 into textiles, when Dubinsky and the I. L. G. W. U. were contributing $425,000 just on general principles, when applications for C. I. O. membership were swamping local office facilities, the A. F. of L. shogunate was appalled. They are dues-minded men. They rightly set great store on the continuous payment of regular and special assessments, the sinews of unionism. They assumed that the C. I. O.—then still the Committee for Industrial Organization—would in essentials adopt the A. F. of L. traditional dues-paying policies. Their confidence in their own future was shaken by headlines heralding triumph after triumph for the C. I. O. as it moved from motors, to glass, to steel. They let it be known that they were willing to call it quits, and talk peace. But the C. I. O. was riding high. It rejected the advice of the late Charles P. Howard that the time had come to return to the federation and capture it for the industrial-union principle.

Ever since then the C. I. O. has been receding from its 1937 high-water mark. Emphatically this does not mean that it won't stage a strong comeback; it is in process of doing that at the present time. But meanwhile the A. F. of L., profiting immensely from the "I want to join a union" enthusiasm generated by C. I. O. energy and daring, has passed its 1920 peak of 4,000,000 dues-paying members, and now has at least twice as many as the C. I. O. with its "book" enrolment of 3,790,000. With the relative positions of the two labor factions thus reversed, it is the A. F. of L. which will be uppity when peace proposals are broached—despite the strivings of Dan Tobin of the Teamsters, the Administration's peace emissary in the A. F. of L., who in this respect has much the same function as Sidney Hillman in the C. I. O.

John L. Lewis

The Administration is, of course, acutely anxious for A. F. of L.-C. I. O. unity. White House pressure to promote it may be expected to increase in intensity almost from day to day. The New Deal is, after all, in the public's opinion definitely pro-labor; and anything that labor does adds its bit to the important intangibles which go to make up the voter's mind. Since the A. F. of L.-C. I. O. dispute is the most unpopular performance in the country today, practical politicians fear that the feelings of antagonism it has aroused will be carried over to the New Deal itself.

Moreover, in the 1940 session of Congress the Garner-Byrd bloc intends to unleash its full power to sabotage the New Deal's domestic program. Item number one on the agenda is the emasculation of the National Labor

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Relations Act, keystone of the Administration's arch of social legislation. In the Senate Edward R. Burke of Nebraska, one-time stalwart of Art J. Smith's Khaki Shirts, has lined up considerable support for his bill to revise the act, a bill which would introduce a Nazi Labor Front version of unionism and under the terms of which the proposed new board of three—representing employers, labor, and the public—could hamstring labor's right to organize. Behind the screen of the nation's absorption in war news, Representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia, head of the House committee investigating the NLRB, has been sending out loaded questionnaires to gather information on the results of the board's work. The exquisitely objective character of the Smith survey is illustrated by the questionnaire distributed to police chiefs throughout the country asking them if, in their opinion, crime has increased since the establishment of the NLRB. Such "data" will be dressed up in the guise of statistics and scientific samplings of public opinion and used to defame the act, the board, the A. F. of L., the C. I. O., and the New Deal itself.

Because of labor's split, Administration forces are in a tough spot when it comes to defending the act and the board. In the first place, the A. F. of L. has its own amendment, the Walsh bill, which among other things would permit employers to interfere freely with unionization and make it mandatory for the board to certify as a collective-bargaining unit a single craft worker in a factory of 100 non-craft employees. In short, the A. F. of L. is preparing to commit hara-kiri by encouraging jurisdictional chaos. At the same time the C. I. O.'s recent advice to its affiliates to indulge in only a "sparing and considered" use of the Wagner act because of the present board's alleged partiality toward the A. F. of L. has provided opponents of the whole idea of government aid to unionism with their clinching argument. "Obviously," they now say in effect, "the whole Labor Board set-up is biased—even labor, both sides of labor, admits it. Just look at the record. The A. F. of L. wants to change the act, and has already been successful in getting rid of that fellow Smith, the other Smith, on the board. The C. I. O. is dissatisfied with the board and would like to have Leiserson dumped. And just the other day young Carey hinted in a speech that the C. I. O. might want to change the act. And there you are!"

LABOR SPLIT AND 1940

The Administration not only needs A. F. of L.-C. I. O. cooperation in beating off attacks on this bulwark of New Deal reform, but is vitally concerned over what labor's cleavage means for 1940. New Dealers remember that in 1936 Pennsylvania was captured for Roosevelt primarily because the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. stood together politically and put over a brilliant publicity campaign. In 1938, however, the A. F. of L. officially went Republican in Pennsylvania, largely to injure the C. I. O., which was busy with its own adventures on the fringes of the state's Democratic Party. As a result Governor Arthur H. James is in Harrisburg, assisting a Republican legislature to emasculate pro-labor laws by the dozen.

While it remains true that the A. F. of L. vote in Presidential contests has never been "deliverable" in the Tammany ward-heeler's use of the term, enough of it can be directed, state by state, to win or lose national elections. Hence the danger, as New Dealers see it, that if the feud between the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. continues, a good share of the A. F. of L.'s ballot strength will go to the Republicans—unless they should nominate an out-and-out reactionary. A tip-off that G. O. P. strategists are already looking in this direction appeared at the last A. F. of L. convention, when Frank Duffy, secretary of the Carpenters and first vice-president of the Executive Council, startled the delegates by first resigning himself and then placing in nomination his boss—and Edgar Bergen—Big Bill Hutcheson, head of the Carpenters. Hutcheson is chairman of the Republican Labor Committee and has been promised the post of Secretary of Labor in the event of a Republican victory in 1940. His return to personal participation in the affairs of the council is simply for the purpose of assisting John Coefield of the Plumbers to head off Administration support now being drummed up by Dan Tobin and William Green, and to thwart any thoroughgoing A. F. of L. indorsement of the New Deal. Hutcheson and Coefield have fertile soil to work in. The A. F. of L. rank and file is still smarting under the Administration's attitude toward maintaining wage scales on WPA projects and its stand on "striking against the government." Nor does the A. F. of L. as a whole like the Administration's fondness for the military mind in alphabetical-agency positions.

In addition, a considerable school of opinion within the A. F. of L. still adheres to the traditional maxim of "reward your friends, punish your enemies" as a guide to labor's political action. Matthew Woll, for example, the most consistently intelligent follower of the Gompers doctrine, is going to plump for this point of view, thus dividing the federation politically into three parts: the Hutcheson-Republican segment, the Green-Tobin-New Deal faction, and the Woll "neutral" and "independent" group—Republican, Democratic, and Mugwump.

The C. I. O. on the other hand, through Labor's Non-Partisan League and its branches, such as the American Labor Party, is going to stick with the New Deal, perhaps in exchange for a set of social and economic policies which will carry forward the implications of its seven-year struggle for social reform. In any coalition between the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. this loyalty could be counted on to smother the Hutcheson and Woll groups and to swing the weight of a united labor movement behind the New Deal at the Democratic convention.

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Mussolini in a Trap

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Rome, November 3

FROM the roof garden on which my room opens, I can see the Duce's Palazzo Venezia and the Vatican. Two world powers. All around is Rome, bathed in sun. It was simple to come here. I got on a train in Paris and got off at Rome twenty-seven hours later. During the night it snowed hard in the Alps, but in the morning the express pulled through the long Simplon Pass into the warmth of Lombardy. The waters of Lago Maggiore were a deep blue set off by green trees and bright flowers. One was tempted to stay and play at Stresa as Ramsay MacDonald had done.

Italy requires no visas. The customs authorities took only a perfunctory glance at one of my suitcases. I had been warned to hide London newspapers. The inspector asked me whether I had any and let me keep them.

I was in the diner when the train entered Italy. I ordered coffee. The waiter said it was against the Italian law to serve coffee. He had brought some in from Switzerland. It was still hot in his boiler. But he was not allowed to serve it. Ultimately, he poured me one cup, then another. Throughout Italy, nevertheless, the prohibition is strictly observed. In Milan, where the train stopped for three hours, I was offered a "surrogate," elsewhere tea or chocolate. Naples cafes sell a horrible brew called "autarchic coffee." In Italy, as in Spain, coffee is important to the poor. Coffee and bread are the crutches of life. The absence of coffee affects politics.

On my way to the beautiful cathedral of Milan I bought an armful of Nazi dailies, weeklies, and illustrated magazines. They are no longer obtainable in London and Paris. British and French periodicals can also be purchased in Italy, but only at selected places, whereas German publications are available at almost every kiosk.

Milan made an impression of nakedness. I missed the posters which had marred every wall and hoarding on my previous visits in 1935 and 1936. Political propaganda is rarely to be seen. The bookshops in Italy display little political literature. Most windows show some serious volumes on international affairs, one copy of "Mein Kampf," two or three books on the exploits of Italian legionnaires in Spain, a few anti-Soviet tales by white Russians, and for the rest—fiction, art, music, history. Scarcely a trace of Abyssinia—forgotten quest for a mirage Eldorado. The newspapers carry few items of Ethiopian news.

A squadron of Savoia-Marchetti bombers flew over the city. The same type dropped bombs on Valencia and Barcelona, on Figueras, and Taragona.

Meatless day in Milan. All Italy has two meatless days a week. Italy is paying for two recent wars. That is why it is not in this one. The population seems to be somewhat less smart than in 1935.

Since the Abyssinian war a federal regulation requires that all clothing and textiles contain an admixture of hemp and other domestic fibers. Cotton imports dropped from 978,000 quintals in the first seven months of 1938 to 651,000 quintals in the same period of 1939. (Statistics are no longer being published.) Store stocks are therefore lower, prices higher, and quality worse. Coal is Italy's biggest import. Imports have been pared, and this winter many homes will remain cold. When the war started, the government rationed petrol. As a result, thirteen out of every fourteen cars in Italy were withdrawn from circulation.

The Italian people are meeting the costs of Danakil and Ogaden, of Aragon and Catalonia.

In 1934 Mussolini prevented Hitler from seizing Austria. In 1935-36 Mussolini turned from this green lawn in front of his house toward a desert three thousand miles away. The conquest of Abyssinia sowed hostility between the British and the Italians. It threw Italy into the arms of Germany. That embrace led into Spain. Ethiopia and Spain spelled the doom of Austria. Czechoslovakia fell as a result, and then Poland's goose was cooked—with Poland's help.

Spain was a barren adventure to suppress "bolshevism" with Nazi help. Abyssinia is a liability. Both left Italy weak and leaning on Germany for ideological inspiration and material aid. The present war has loosened Germany's death-hold on Italy.

Germany must now court Italy. The Allies must, too. Nothing could be more delectable to a government which has been treated like a satrapy by Hitler and which regarded the Allies as enemies. In each case, the courtship consists of caresses and tacit threats. That conduces to infidelity. France and England have moderated the rigor of their blockade in favor of Italy, and Italy is permitted to import goods which, to the knowledge of London and Paris, are reexported to Germany. Moreover, exports from Germany have flowed freely through Italy and thence by ship to Latin America and other countries. England is pressing the neutrals to impose sanctions on Germany, but Italy enjoys some exemptions because of its between-the-camps position. Of late, however, the screws are being turned tighter. Last week the Italian steamship Saturnia, homeward bound, was detained three days at Gibraltar and relieved of a large load of copper

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intended for German consumption. Simultaneously, the French and British buy heavily from the Italians and supply them with raw materials for the manufacture of equipment and arms, tanks and airplane parts which the Western powers will use against Germany. Thus Italy is having it coming and going, and neither side can complain since both draw benefits from Italy's neutrality. Italy has engaged in two wars without profit. Now it profits from a war in which it is not engaged.

The war is a rare chance to save Fascist economy. Fascism first tried autarchy, which is a policy of reconciliation with poverty. Many fine buildings were built, lands reclaimed, bridges erected, railways electrified, and important archaeological work was done. The results were impressive but inadequate, and without abandoning autarchy Mussolini sought salvation in the resurgence of the Roman Empire. Italy, however, is poor. And the twentieth century is not the first. Ancient Rome was mistress of a world in which Britain, France, and Germany had scarcely emerged. Today Italian imperialism finds the road barred. Accordingly, a third phase is dawning. Italy simply hopes to do business in neutrality and thus replenish its depleted resources.

THE PURGE IS ON

Neutrality for a Fascist is neither dynamic nor heroic. "Neutrality," Mussolini once said, "is cowardice." One would expect neutrality from a "decadent," "bourgeois" "plutodemocracy." Italy, mark you, is not a neutral. It is a "non-belligerent." But Mussolini would probably have preferred to go into the war the day the shells began to burst. His "yes-men" indeed urged such a course. Wiser observers cautioned against it. Marshal Badoglio, supreme commander of the armed forces, reported to Mussolini in August that the army would not put its heart into a war on the side of Germany. It was not prepared for war, he declared. It has not yet recovered from the military expenditures in Spain, and is insufficiently supplied with shoes, uniforms, and munitions. Nothing contributed more to Italian neutrality than the two and a half years of Loyalist resistance. A serious observer puts the number of first-line airplanes in the Italian air force as low as one thousand.

When the army was mobilized in September, the soldiers fraternized with the French poilus holding the line in the Alps, and at the call of the evening bugle the men of each nationality scampered back across the frontier into their respective camps. Now Italian detachments are relieved every few weeks. Army officers congratulated one another and drank toasts on the announcement of Italian abstention. Anti-German sentiment is strong. For instance, the pro-Ally *Osservatore Romano,* Vatican daily organ, has boosted its circulation from 40,000 before the war to some 130,000 at present, whereas the Fascist press, which is friendly, but not as friendly as before, to Germany, is losing readers. Farmhouses and railway structures on the road from Rome to Naples carry the officially stenciled slogan "Viva Duce, Viva Hitler." They date from Hitler's visit to Italy, and from that visit also dates Germany's new unpopularity. I paid much more attention to "Dux, Rex, Pax," painted crudely by an eclectic individualist. Signor Bocchini, the chief of the OVRA, or secret police, moreover, passed on information that the people were talking—which is unhealthy—and talking against the war. Every Italian I spoke to rejoiced over non-participation. So "the Day" was allowed to pass, and the military alliance—flower of the axis—was ignored. The word "axis" is rarely if ever used in the press. Mussolini cleverly maneuvered Hitler into sending him a note which might have been written by the Duce, and according to one reliable version actually was, to the effect that Germany could handle the situation alone without outside assistance. There was thus no betrayal.

The Fascist regime was supremely disturbed by the sentiment of the army and the population. The government decided to act. The people have been told to shut up and refrain from back-seat driving. A sign distributed by the Fascist Party to restaurants, cafes, and other public places reads: "Here one does not make predictions or engage in discussions on high policy and high strategy." That is an order, not a statement of fact. It is a humiliating order. But I wonder about its effect. Before any Italian accepts a coin he strikes it on a hard surface, specially supplied to street-car and bus conductors, to test its ring. Many counterfeit pieces are in circulation. The counterfeiters risk severe punishment. The people will also air their opinions. In the provinces placards are more definite. "For habitual propagators of fantastic reports who consciously or unconsciously alarm the country, hard days are in store. The Squadrismo [strong-arm squad] of ——— is very much alive, and some individuals already have reason to know how much alive it is." Mussolini himself, in a speech at Bologna on September 23, referred to "small groups of miserable human dregs" who are "responsible for the circulation of rumors, the most ridiculous of which refer to me." He promised "to clean up" the "riffraff." The purge is on, and castor oil flows copiously. (The dictatorship within Italy is not nearly so bloody as the German or Russian, but it is bad enough, and it even makes cowards of some foreign journalists.) On September 16 the *Popolo d'Italia,* Mussolini's particular paper, inveighed against "bellyachers, rumor-mongers, toy strategists, and members of a certain lounge-lizard snobbery." On September 30 the Duce said at Genoa that apathy would not be tolerated. Something was obviously pretty rotten.

The army too required attention. There had been friction between the army and the Black Shirt militia. Mussolini mentioned it delicately in several public utterances. The army was jealous of the Black Shirts' higher

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pay and special position within the state. Soon after the war started it was finally recognized that this trouble demanded an immediate cure. The daily wage of the regular soldier was accordingly raised on September 13 from forty centesimi to one lira, five cents. At the same time the Black Shirt's emolument was cut from seven lire a day to one. This was tantamount to incorporating the Black Shirts into the army. The Black Shirts are no longer the élite of fascism. To obviate any untoward circumstances that might be provoked by their demotion, the Carabinieri guards, brought up to a strength of 50,000 on the day before the step was taken, were posted on the streets. The army, linked by tradition to the Crown, has assumed a new political importance.

HAS FASCISM LOST ITS GRIP?

Thus the war in which Italy is neutral has revealed a crisis in the history of fascism. Economic weakness, spiritual tepidness, and political flabbiness are thrown into relief by the European conflagration. These conditions existed before, but dictators are not invariably well informed, for they must see many things through the eyes of yes-men who dare not or will not always tell the truth. Mussolini had been less active than usual, and he had less first-hand personal evidence. When it came to taking stock to decide how Italy could meet the war, grave disorders were discovered in the body politic.

The cracks in the Fascist structure which the war highlighted continue to cause Mussolini and the Fascist leadership much concern. The regime is making a noticeable effort to recapture the élan of the pre-victory period of struggle, before the "March on Rome" in October, 1922. A poster which appeared in Rome several days ago tries to recall the distant day when Black Shirts were scribbling *Viva il Fascismo* on walls, drawing the skull and crossbones on doors, meeting furtively in underground "cells," and stenciling the battle-ax fasces on crude placards. This poster advertises the opening of a Milan school devoted to the teaching of the *mistica* of fascism. When a movement which gave circuses and promised bread resorts to mystic appeals it is in distress. The Fascists must be wondering whether they can still guide the Italian nation to its "destiny." Has fascism lost its verve and self-confidence? The Italian nation, by the democracy of guarded whispers, has indicated that it prefers to resist "destiny," eat and dress better, and die in bed.

A campaign is being conducted to reassure the nation. While I was in Rome, Mussolini appeared on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia and delivered a speech of exactly fifty-eight words. "Fascism," he said, "asks only one privilege for itself: to construct and to act in all circumstances with the people and for the people." "To construct" means not to go to war. "With the people" means not to offend their desire for peace. "With the people and for the people" is the highest aspiration of fascism. The omission of Abraham Lincoln's third phrase is the essential difference between fascism and democracy.

It was at this period that men with long years of experience in cautious reporting talked to me about the impending fate of the Fascist regime. One said the regime was "shaky," another that it was "wobbly," and a third, who meticulously collects cold facts and statistics for a big concern, said: "Do you think it is in danger?" He was not asking me, he was telling me. I have always listened with interest and skepticism to such estimates of the future of dictatorships. They have nine lives because they cut short the lives of oppositionists. One never knows how many of the nine lives they have already lived.

Courtesy *l'Humanite*
Count Ciano

Three days after Mussolini's fifty-eight-word address he "changed the guard," as the Fascist press styles it. Seven ministers, a majority of his Cabinet, were dismissed, and with them numerous sub-secretaries and minor officials. Secretary of the Fascist Party Starace, Chief of Staff of the Army Pariani, and Chief of the Air Force Valle also went into the discard. This was the biggest personnel shift in Fascist history, involving the key ministers in economic affairs, in military affairs, and in politics. (Foreign Minister Ciano survived it with increased influence.) Such a clean sweep, in stormy times, is a daring move with a purpose. Apparently Mussolini felt that speeches no longer reassured the population.

The removal of Pariani and Valle suggests that the Duce has checked on Badoglio's reports of the army's unpreparedness and found them correct. Starace and Alfieri, Minister of Popular Culture and Director of the Press, had been among the five top Fascist leaders under Mussolini. They were the yes-men who had told him all was proceeding wonderfully in the country, and they were pro-German.

AFTER MUSSOLINI?

If all the difficulties of the recent past could arise despite Mussolini's popularity and capacities, how would his heir fare? Who would he be? Would there be a struggle for the succession?

Mussolini is not dead and not old as statesmen go. In fact, he looks sturdy and strong. But reports of his illness circulate widely, and one hears a tale of his having been shot at during the summer army maneuvers. I do not know whether one iota of this information is correct. But it has been so persistent that the regime itself has

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resorted to counter-propaganda. Mussolini piloted a bomber over the sea. Mussolini drove a tank. He does all these things well. He has been appearing much oftener in public of late and is in closer contact with people. He makes more speeches. The regime obviously attaches vast importance to dissipating the impression that the Duce is not at the helm or will not be long at the helm. Nevertheless, discussions about his successor are chronic.

The candidates mentioned are son-in-law Ciano, whom diplomats regard as intelligent and able, Marshal Balbo of Libya, and ex-Ambassador Grandi. But recently a new name was added to the list—Crown Prince Humbert of Piedmont. This is significant. Must the Fascists turn to the conservative, not-too-Fascist royal family for Italy's next ruler? Are they borrowing from the prestige of the monarchy to bolster the authority of their own political system? Humbert has been appointed commander of one of Italy's two armies, and is more active politically.

All the gossip about the succession is symptomatic of a regime in a minor key. Would war revive the dynamism of fascism? Has the country the physical and economic strength to stand a war? I imagine this occupies the Duce much more than whether he is pro-German or pro-Ally or whether he could tolerate the partitioning of the Balkans. To the good Fascist it is a shock and a tragedy that it should be a pleasure and a necessity to remain neutral in a war which will decide so much.

ITALY AND THE WAR

No one will venture a guess on how long Italian "non-belligerency" will last. When the war started, the British and French were prepared, and some elements were eager, to invade Italy. The Allied military assumed that in three weeks they could occupy northern Italy at least down to Milan. This is one of the reasons for Italian neutrality. During the winter, when the Alps are covered with snow, this Allied threat cannot be carried out so easily. But spring follows winter. If Mussolini were to join Germany he would invite an Anglo-French attack. To repulse it he would have to admit the Reichswehr, which the nation would resent. Italy would become a battlefield. As soon as Italy becomes an active enemy, moreover, England can close the Suez Canal and isolate Abyssinia. Abyssinia is a hostage against war. Finally, the Turks want to pounce on and retake the Dodecanese Archipelago the moment the Duce gives the pro-German sign.

In view of these dangers, the German-Italian military alliance—the "Pact of Steel"—signed May 22, 1939, in Berlin by Ribbentrop and Ciano in Hitler's presence, was accompanied by a stipulation that Italy would not go to war over Poland and that there must be no general war before 1942. Italy wished to recuperate. Three weeks before the war started Ciano went to see Ribbentrop at Salzburg. He told friends in Rome he would exercise a moderating influence and hoped to come back with good news—that is, no-war news. But Ribbentrop rudely abused Ciano. The next day Ciano lunched with Hitler at Berchtesgaden, and after lunch Hitler ran him around on a brisk walk for two and one-half hours. Ciano warned Hitler that England and France would fight. Hitler ridiculed this notion, frankly declaring that Ciano just did not understand politics. Ciano is still smarting under Hitler's verbal assaults. But he has the comfort of having understood better than Hitler. He also had made it clear in advance that Italy did not propose to take up arms. So Ciano, who helped forge the Italian end of the axis, is disillusioned, bitter, and contemplative. The Italian government still recognizes the Polish ambassador's diplomatic status, and Poland, a Catholic country, evokes much sympathy in Italy. The Vatican is increasingly anti-Nazi. The court is anti-German.

Courtesy *l'Humanite*
Il Duce

Moreover, Mussolini, who believed, unlike other dictators, in Allied resolution, also respects Anglo-French might, and he will take to heart the fact that American supplies are now available to the Western powers. Italy fears Russian expansion southward toward the Straits. While the Catholic *Osservatore Romano* has been outspokenly anti-Soviet, the Fascist press, with the exception of one vicious tirade by Balbo's paper against Voroshilov—marshal versus marshal—is rather sympathetic to Bolshevik foreign policy. But this may be explained by the pro-Nazi convictions of Press Director Alfieri, who has become—heavenly Duce joke—ambassador to the Holy See.

It would be embarrassing enough for Mussolini to act as an ally of Germany. The nation detests Germany. But to be open partners with the Russians? After Spain? Often during the Spanish civil war Ciano would take Boris Stein, the Soviet ambassador, to a map of Spain and pointing to the fronts say: "You see, this is where you are, this is where we are." These considerations reinforce the universal Italian desire for peace.

On the other hand, Germany can apply pressure to Italy. The Italian port of Trieste is exposed to German aggression, and so is Yugoslavia. Their occupation would make Germany coterminous with Italian Albania. Besides, Mussolini is anti-Versailles and revisionist. He was highly impressed by the performance of the German military machine in Poland—although he also knows how badly the Poles fumbled the job. Before hostilities commenced, Hitler, in one of his many moods of over-exhilaration, said he would be in Paris in three

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months. German victories in the first phase of the war might induce Hitler to make strong demands on Italy. Mussolini will wait to see the Allied armies in full operation.

Common sense and the conflict of possibilities should keep Italy neutral. But there is one "but"—the Balkans. In Rome this is the most-discussed angle of Italian diplomacy. Italy needs a neutral, stable Balkans. So do the Allies. So does Turkey. Encroachment by Germany or Russia in the Balkan area would disturb Italy, the Allies, and Turkey. Logically, this prospect should serve to improve the relations between Italy and the Allies and between Italy and Turkey. Italy is already negotiating, somewhat successfully, with a number of Balkan states with a view to forming a Balkan peace bloc. England is lending Italy a hand in obtaining a larger share of Balkan trade.

The chance, however, that this winter Russia and Germany will proceed to partition one or more Balkan nations agitates Rome. If Italy were asked to be the third party in this adventure and told that if it did not accept Germany would seize Italy's share—which might be the Dalmatian coast and part of Greece—Mussolini would face a painful dilemma. For by accepting he would provoke Allied and Turkish retaliation and precipitate his country into a war which the regime can scarcely stand. And by refusing he would imperil Italy's strategic position and commercial future, and make himself dependent on Allied aid. A Balkan push in the next few months would imperil Italian neutrality and might force Italy to take sides. But even Mussolini cannot know now what side he would have to choose. This is an additional motive for neutrality until the choice is imposed by the course of events.

As often as I can I tear myself away from seeing the sites of ancient Rome or interrogating friends about modern Rome and its diplomacy and sit on my roof reading Herbert Matthews's manuscript on the Spanish war. It is a noble book by a noble person about a noble people. The noble people was martyred by democratic appeasers and foreign and domestic fascists. I raise my eyes from the typed pages and look at the Palazzo Venezia and the Vatican. These two powers intervened against Spain and against Europe, for the embryo of the present great war was contained in the Spanish war, and all who were pro-Franco share the guilt for the present catastrophe. Under the shadow of Mussolini's and Pacelli's brown walls I go back to the tragic, heroic streets of barricaded Madrid, to the morgue of Barcelona filled with pieces of the bodies of men, women, and children killed by the Duce's bombs, to the Ebro battlefield, to the decency and the cemeteries of Republican Spain. I see Spanish faces, white with fear, waiting for death from Savoia-Marchettis that hover over Valencia on orders from Mussolini. I see the Loyalist leaders striving against discouraging odds to serve their country, now outcasts in a world that courts Mussolini. What a world!

Canada's War Election

BY T. E. WOOD

Montreal, November 6

THE Quebec election of October 25 deposed the three-year-old regime of Maurice Duplessis and brought back to power the Liberal Party, which had been shattered in the election of 1936. The interpretation commonly placed on the outcome both here and abroad is that it is a conclusive demonstration of French Canada's solidarity with the Dominion's war effort. "The election results register Quebec's determination to do her full part in the voluntary war effort Canada is making," said the Toronto *Daily Star* on the following day. A somewhat more impartial approach will be necessary, however, if the full significance of the vote is to be understood; and it will be necessary, as well, to view the election not as an isolated phenomenon but as an integral incident in the history of French Canadian nationalism.

The "pro-war" propaganda with which the Liberal Party won the election might indeed have been taken for anti-war propaganda in another country. We quote only one example: "The hundreds of thousands of Liberals who next Wednesday will vote *en bloc* against the regime of the National Union do not want conscription either. They too have sons whom they expect to keep with them. Do you believe for an instant that they would sacrifice their children for their party if they thought that the Liberal government would decree conscription?" (speech of Lucien Parizeau, reprinted verbatim in *Le Canada* of October 23). The issue of participation was posed thus in the Liberal press: In this war justice is on the side of the Allies. Canada, nevertheless, is participating in it, not because Britain's interests are at stake, but because its own interests are threatened. Its participation, moreover, is on an entirely voluntary basis. If the French Canadians do not wish to enlist, no one will compel them to. But for their part they must show a spirit of equal tolerance; they must be prepared to grant their English-

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speaking compatriots the right to participate actively in the war if their sympathies and their opinions so incline them. Only on the basis of such mutual tolerance can Canadian unity be maintained. In his speech at Quebec on October 18 Ernest Lapointe, Minister of Justice, voiced a serious fear when he said, "If it is civil war that Duplessis wants, then Ottawa will protect Quebec." Behind this utterance were the memories of old struggles between the French and English in Canada, of the particularly critical situation that developed during the World War, of the scope and virulence of the nationalist movement in recent years.

The problem of the French minority has figured largely in the history of Canada, but at no time has it had greater importance than at the present. Constituting a third of the Canadian population, the French Canadians are unquestionably the strongest and most significant minority in the Western Hemisphere. Ethnically homogeneous, geographically concentrated, attached to the land which they inhabit by centuries of tradition, united, too, by the ties of language and religion, they have thus far resisted all tendencies toward assimilation and all attempts at subjugation. No issue today can rouse the spirit of French Canadian nationalism more than the threat of conscription for foreign wars. When the federal government attempted to impose conscription in 1917, riots and demonstrations of protest took place throughout the province of Quebec. The high point of the struggle was reached in Easter Week, 1918, when bloody fighting occurred in Quebec City. Though the uprising was suppressed with few casualties, it resulted in the de facto suspension of the National Service Act as far as the French Canadians were concerned.

French Canadians are opposed to participation in Britain's wars for two reasons. In the first place, having lived on this continent for more than four hundred years, they have about as much enthusiasm at the prospect of becoming embroiled in Europe's conflicts as do the most extreme isolationists in the American Senate. In the second place, they feel that they are being exploited economically. The monopoly of the wealth of the country gained by the British at the time of the conquest has never been broken. Looking about them today French Canadians find that the banks, the factories, and the natural resources of the province are in the hands of *les Anglais*—an all-inclusive term for those who speak the English language—and that they, the original pioneers, are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. They present figures to prove that the French Canadians, who constitute more than two-sevenths of the population of the country, possess only one-seventh of the wealth.

Since the Catholic church is often regarded as the fountainhead of French Canadian nationalism, it would be in order to discuss its role at this point. Shortly after the British conquest the Catholic church turned toward the new authorities with the pledge of its wholehearted allegiance, and in return for this pledge it was finally able to procure guaranties which insured its own survival and established it as the intermediary between the French Canadian people and the government. On the surface the policy of the church appears bewilderingly contradictory. Even today the Orangemen of Ontario accuse it of fostering hatred of the English—which is, in large degree, true; at the same time French Canadian nationalists will accuse it of subservience to the English—and in this charge there is also a goodly measure of truth. These two aspects of clerical policy do not so much contradict as complement each other. On the one hand, the church has been in constant fear that intimate contact between the French and the Protestant English would weaken the hold of the Catholic religion on the French population, and it has therefore exerted itself to isolate the French Canadians from the English. On the other hand, it is aware that it enjoys great privileges under the British regime, and accordingly, whenever a crisis has arisen, the clergy has informed its followers that loyalty to the country's rulers was a God-given duty. The nationalism of the clergy, instead of weakening British rule, has become an essential instrument of that rule.

During the depression years the spirit of French Canadian nationalism, dormant since the war, began to stalk again. Nationalist organizations of a hundred different varieties mushroomed up—the Jeunesse Separatiste, the Jeunesse Patriote, the Parti Autonomiste, the Achat Chez Nous movement (Buy from French Canadians). Aware of the direction in which the wind was blowing, Maurice Duplessis, leader of the provincial Conservatives, tied up with Paul Gouin and his Action Liberale Nationale, which had until then been a left-wing movement inside the Liberal Party. Together they unfurled the flag of "French Canada for the French Canadians," roused the people against the trusts, and drove the Liberals from the seats which they had occupied for two score years.

Duplessis, however, found that it was much easier to fulminate against the trusts when in opposition than to legislate against them when in power. Compelled by the exigencies of office to abandon this feature of his program, he soon devised substitute policies. The Padlock law, which gave the Attorney General (read Duplessis) the right to padlock any residence which he thought had been used for the purpose of disseminating "Communist" propaganda, ranks as his chief claim to immortality. Labor legislation which he introduced virtually outlawed the closed shop and gave the government the most arbitrary powers in setting wage standards. As the result of these accomplishments, his popularity waned rapidly.

Until recently authoritative opinion was generally agreed that if Canada participated in another European conflict it would run a serious risk of civil war between

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its French and English peoples. Until recently, too, the Canadian government kept assuring the French Canadians that it had no intention of going to the assistance of a continent which "does not know how to run its own affairs." But when war came, the King government was compelled to yield to pressure from without and pressure from within, despite its fear of an internal crisis. During the week before Canada entered the war turbulent meetings in opposition to participation were held in the most important Quebec municipalities. Nationalist orators denounced the war as an imperialist war; they charged that the defense of democracy and Christianity were bogus issues, that Britain at different times had tried to come to terms with both Germany and Russia; and they spoke of armed resistance and of separation from Canada. Protests came to the federal government from the two most important French Canadian organizations, the St. Jean Baptiste Society and the National Catholic Unions, and from many less important groups. Protests also came from municipal councils and chambers of commerce. The rural press was unanimously against participation; *L'Action Catholique,* the organ of the hierarchy, which had supported participation in the Great War, gave much prominence to the reports of protest meetings, and the most restrained of the French papers displayed an uneasy neutrality.

There can be little doubt that Duplessis saw in the war situation an opportunity to recoup his lost popularity. With a steam-roller apparatus at his disposal, he thought that if he took a stand against the war and if he gave the Liberals only a month to prepare for the elections, he was certain of a smashing victory. He failed primarily because he did not convince the French Canadians that he could protect them from conscription more effectively than the Liberals could. He also erred in his estimate of the prestige that the federal ministers opposing him, Lapointe and Cardin, enjoyed in Quebec.

From the welter of charges and counter-charges that featured in the propaganda of the Liberal Party and the National Union, conscription stood forth as the paramount issue. The National Union reminded French Canadians that the federal government had promised in 1914 that there would be no conscription and had subsequently gone back on its word. A vote for the Liberals was a vote for conscription, it asserted; a vote for Duplessis was a vote against conscription. The Liberals replied by pledging their opposition to conscription; Lapointe and Cardin pointed with pride to the part they had played in the anti-conscription struggle of 1917. The federal ministers emphasized the fact that the issue of conscription would be decided in the federal government and that only a strong French Canadian representation would prevent its institution. They warned the province that if Duplessis were elected, the French Canadian ministers in the federal Cabinet would be compelled to resign and that this would inevitably result in the formation of a union government, ultra-imperialist in composition, which would immediately introduce compulsory military service. They claimed that only the Liberals could prevent conscription and that a vote for Duplessis was in effect a vote for conscription.

The French Canadians pondered the question. If conscription could be avoided and if they could at the same time preserve friendly relations with the rest of Canada, so much the better. In the end they chose to intrust the struggle against conscription to the ministers in the federal government. The outcome of the election, however, can scarcely be said to provide a definitive solution. From a purely quantitative standpoint the results are not as reassuring as they appear at first glance. The National Union, though it elected only sixteen out of eighty-six representatives, obtained approximately 40 per cent of the votes cast. The Action Liberale Nationale obtained at least 5 per cent. When it is realized that the English minority disposed of almost a fifth of the ballots and that in the present election it was overwhelmingly Liberal, it is apparent that Duplessis had almost half the French Canadian population behind him. Considered qualitatively, the situation does not improve. Those who voted for the Liberals voted only for accepting a limited participation in the war and categorically against conscription. Those who cast their ballot for Duplessis and Gouin did so in the knowledge that their vote would be construed as a vote against participation and that the victory of their party would isolate Quebec from the rest of Canada.

The present situation provides an interesting commentary on the development of Canadian opinion since the war. In 1917 Lapointe and Cardin, who stood with the Liberal Party against conscription, were accused by the Conservatives of aiding the Germans by fomenting disunity: "A vote for the Liberals is a vote for the Kaiser!" said the English press. Today Lapointe and Cardin—still opponents of conscription—are hailed in English Canada as the champions of national unity. In their turn they accuse Duplessis—erstwhile Conservative stalwart—of aiding the Germans. "The Union Nationale should change its name to the Union *Nazi-onale,*" said Lapointe. If all this has any significance, it is that English Canada today is quite prepared to sympathize with French Canada's aversion to conscription.

It is difficult to predict what will happen in Quebec because in the equation of its future there are so many unknowns. The first of these unknowns is the international situation. If Canada does not become more deeply involved in the war than it is at present, then the French Canadians may conceivably become reconciled to participation. If, on the other hand, Canada is compelled to make greater commitments, the situation in Quebec is bound to become acute. Another uncertain quantity is the nationalist movement itself. Now that he is defeated,

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Duplessis will probably throw caution to the winds and enter into demagogic opposition. Behind the political parties there are a number of organizations which, while they are receiving little prominence at the present time, will unquestionably come to the fore if the situation becomes more critical. There is the Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique (J. O. C.) with about 40,000 members, drilled, militant, and rigidly centralized, whose leader, Father Henri Roy, is an old admirer of Belgian Rexism. There is the fascist movement headed by Adrien Arcand, numerically small but always dangerous in a province where corporatism has for years been the official social doctrine of the dominant religion. And there are, in addition, a whole host of lesser organizations that aspire to an independent French Canada and, in most cases, to *l'état corporatif*.

Among the masses of Quebec today the sentiment is as solidly as ever against war. Almost everywhere one comes across the declaration that if the federal government attempts to impose conscription, French Canada will have to declare its independence. It is pointed out, in connection with this, that the circumstances are far more favorable today than they ever have been before because the rest of Canada is so torn by centrifugal tendencies that it could not possibly resist the demand of a united and militant Quebec. It is also pointed out that, apart from Toronto, Hamilton, and Vancouver—the cities with the most solid British population—there is very little enthusiasm for the war in English Canada.

When the war first broke out, organized pressure groups in English Canada such as the Canadian Legion and the Canadian Corps carried on a reckless agitation for conscription. But toward the end of September they suddenly stopped pressing their demands: they had apparently realized that they were exacerbating an already critical situation for the federal government. Now that the Quebec elections are over and the Liberals are in power, there is a serious danger that they may revive their agitation. From the standpoint of maintaining the unity not only of the French and English peoples but of English-speaking Canada itself, this would be the sheerest folly.

In the Wind

DESPITE PUBLIC denials of a coming "witch-hunt," agents of J. Edgar Hoover privately boast that they have compiled a list of "known radicals" in the New York area. Everyone on the list, they predict, will be promptly arrested if the United States gets into war.

EVEN IF it never happened, this story, relayed from Paris, expresses a current European attitude. It is said that a reporter encountered a French military official who had just left the War Office. The official appeared depressed; the reporter asked him why. "Well, everybody's gloomy at the office," he explained. "We just got word that Italy's planning to come in on our side."

A WELL-KNOWN foreign correspondent who has just reached these shores relates that on the night that Berlin dispatches reported the signing of the German-Russian pact, London newspapermen called up the Russian Ambassador, Maisky, to get his reaction. Maisky's retort was prompt: "Don't believe it—it's just Nazi propaganda."

IT IS NO secret that legislation to outlaw the Communist Party and the Bund is being weighed in Washington, but New Dealers are wrestling privately with several knotty problems. The most plausible ground for action, they believe, is the allegation that Communists and Bundsmen are "agents of a foreign power" and that their loyalty to the United States comes second. But legislation couched in those terms, they assert, would almost inevitably involve the followers of another international—the Catholic church.

THERE WAS a tense moment at a recent good-will party at International House in New York. Representatives of various nationalities had been singing native songs and drinking beer; the atmosphere was definitely convivial. Suddenly a group of British residents, having finished "Tipperary," started to sing "Over There." There was a sudden hush; then a number of Americans interrupted the song: "Pipe down," they yelled.

GREAT BRITAIN'S Minister of Information was recently urged to subsidize publication of David Low's cartoons in Eastern European newspapers. The Minister protested: "Couldn't we just use one of our staff men, for, say, five pounds a week—it wouldn't matter, would it?"

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST Negroes in the civil-defense program has caused a minor flurry in Britain. The commandant of stretcher-bearer units in Paddington recently dismissed a Negro officer in the group, voicing deep regret but explaining that some of his fellow-workers "took exception to the presence of colored people." African students in London, reports the Manchester *Guardian*, are threatening to make the case a *cause célèbre*.

CANDOR DEPARTMENT: From a prospectus issued by the Trowbridge Farm, a New York resort: "The Civil Rights law does not allow us to refuse accommodations to anyone on account of religious belief, but we have a regular patronage who reserve the same rooms from year to year and they constitute the society of the place. For reasons we cannot understand and find impossible to explain, they are averse to association with Hebrews. Under the circumstances we feel it is our duty to advise those of that faith that it would be unpleasant for them to spend their vacation at the Trowbridge Farm."

ITALY, ROBERT DELL reports, has nailed her colors to the fence.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The Hague, November 13, by Cable

THE grave state of anxiety which has dominated official diplomatic circles here has been modified somewhat by the receipt of a very polite message from Hitler that he will personally examine the mediation proposal of Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold and answer soon. It is not believed that he would reply in these terms if he were contemplating an immediate move against the Dutch. This may seem a slight reason for the sudden optimism, but there is in fact a great sense of relief. According to one story going the rounds, to which considerable credence is attached, the Belgian King was asked by a very prominent German what would be the attitude of Belgium if Hitler should insist on access to the sea at or near Flushing in southern Holland. The King, it is said, went at once to The Hague, and the joint offer of mediation resulted. Another story, confirmed by an important banking source, asserts that Hitler personally favored an attempt to obtain control of the Dutch coast but was held off by the Foreign Office, which feared the effect on neutral opinion.

The German press campaign attacking Holland for not opposing British interference with its shipping and declaring that their inaction made the Dutch unneutral really alarmed the diplomatic corps by its resemblance to the press attacks on the Czechs and Poles. Fortunately the attack died down suddenly, but the belief persisted that Holland might suddenly face an ultimatum. All this led Mr. Gordon, the American Minister, to publish again Hull's appeal to all Americans to leave the country unless their stay was absolutely essential. Additional cause for alarm has been found in the German shooting outrage at Venlo on the border, the violations of Belgian territory by German fliers, and the heavy concentration of German troops on the frontier—130,000 between Gladbach and Aachen. At the request of the government these facts have been carefully concealed by the press. Only one story has appeared so far, in one daily, giving the German denial that any invasion was threatened. Hence the cafes are crowded with people who are gay and happy—in marked contrast to those I have just seen in Germany.

After the Munich explosion some observers were of the belief that Hitler might need quick foreign action somewhere to distract attention from domestic conditions. This theory I am convinced is false. I believe the Foreign Office officials in Berlin were sincere when they assured me that they had no desire to arouse Washington, other neutrals, and world opinion by repeating the errors of the last war. Incidentally they insisted they were not guilty of the Athenia sinking; strictest orders had been given to avoid another Lusitania. Any threat of America's entering the war would further depress the spirit of the Germans, which is already so low that an officer on leave from the front remarked publicly in Frankfort, "The spirit of the people is devastating at home; it is much better at the front." Again, while it was easy to put over atrocity stories about the Poles, it would be harder to arouse hate against the Dutch, who are quite inoffensive and cannot be blamed for not wanting to antagonize the British, who might completely stop Dutch shipping. An attack on Holland would convince many Germans of the truth of Allied assertions that Hitler menaces all small nations in Europe. Hence it is my belief that Hitler will not attempt it unless he later finds himself in great straits. The complete confidence of the German military that they can smash England completely by next spring will also make against hasty action now. The only possible excuse that would go down with the German public would be absolute military necessity, as in the case of the Russian alliance, regarding which many if not most important business men believe the price paid was too high. Many workers are uneasy over Polish events and the treatment of Jews. The rape of Holland now would solidify their antagonism.

There is still another source of uneasiness here in Holland. It is feared that the Dutch colonies, which are rich and prosperous, are great temptations to Hitler. He could not seize them now even if he invaded Holland, but if the war ended in a stalemate or in his victory he could then take them, thus getting better possessions than the pre-war German colonies. This may seem fantastic in New York, but it is a true measure of the state of Dutch nerves before the joint peace move.

The Low Countries are certainly in a worse fix than they were in the last war, and they believe themselves entitled to be heard on stopping the war. They are convinced a long war means ruin for all, not the freeing of Europe from Hitlerism; the only victors would be the Communists. This fear is shared by many diplomats. Today the situation probably boils down to whether three men can devise a face-saving method of starting conversations without appearing weak or beaten. On that question may hang the lives of millions of human beings —even the survival of European civilization.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

The Danube Peoples

THE DANUBE. By Emil Lengyel. Random House. $3.75.

THE author of this up-to-date history of Central Europe was born in Hungary; he is today an American journalist of renown; he writes like the *Weltbürger* he has become by being at home on two continents. Many a book about Central Europe, nationally and culturally the most complicated part of the world, suffers either from a nationalistic bias or, if the author is a foreigner, from superficial knowledge. It is therefore a great pleasure to read a work which deals on every page with historical and contemporary controversies in the Danube Valley by a man who has a truly international point of view.

William Van Til published last year "The Danube Flows Through Fascism," the description of a fold-boat trip down the Danube as far as the Iron Gate, which was in its minor scope excellent. It gave a vivid report of life on the banks of the river two summers ago. Emil Lengyel flies over the valley at a high altitude, including in his view all the countries whose destinies are bound up with Europe's largest river. He also looks far back into time—"The Danube flows through twenty thousand years" is his first sentence. And in his last chapter he looks into the future, presenting the idea of a Danubian Confederation put forward by Louis Kossuth from his Italian exile more than half a century ago. Kossuth proposed then what seems to have become a war aim today—the economic and political alliance of the Central European states. Such an organization would permit the people of the Danube to live in peace, stem both pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism, and, like the Scandinavian block of states, serve as a nucleus for that European federation which the English Labor Party and German and Czech exiles from Hitlerism propose today.

An immense amount of material is admirably organized and presented. The political, economic, and cultural structure of each of the Danube states is given in descriptive monographs. A sharp sense of what is essential and useful to the average reader is constantly and successfully at work. Short cuts are necessarily taken, but no important part of the Danubian landscape is missing. The books of newspaper correspondents on the latest developments in Vienna or Budapest deal often merely with the symptoms of Europe's disease. Emil Lengyel digs deeper and attacks the causes of the sickness. He enables the reader, so to speak, to see the method in the madness—the historical trend. Particularly excellent is his use of anecdote and of short profiles of personalities; these are not incidental or extraneous but an organic part of the whole grandiose story, and at the same time provide accentuation and commentary.

I enjoyed most the chapters on Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. The anachronism of the powerful remnant of feudal society in these countries is plastically exposed against the modern background. The methods of the Third Reich in using accumulated grievances for its own ends and the complete amorality of the possessing classes fighting behind patriotic slogans for their economic privileges are effectively shown; as is the struggle of the common people between these two forces. Without ever becoming a propagandist the author forecasts great events in the Balkans merely by making convincingly clear the direction in which history is moving in Southeastern Europe.

For all its political timeliness the book remains above all a readable story of those peoples in Europe who may soon again play a decisive role in the development of a war-torn continent, as they have done so often before. The volume contains many photographs and is beautifully printed. It would make a first-class Christmas present.

FRANZ HOELLERING

Statistical Dynamite

DIVIDENDS TO PAY. By E. D. Kennedy. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

WE HAVE had numerous studies of monopoly capitalism in the past ten years, but there is still room for this vigorous new analysis. Despite a hard statistical core, it is written with a verve which makes for easy reading. E. D. Kennedy, the author, has had unusual opportunities for observing how big business works, for as a member of the staff of *Fortune* he wrote many of those sleek and shiny corporation surveys for which that magazine is justly famous.

This work, however, is not concerned with the sins and virtues of individual corporations and capitalists but with the outsize corporations as a group and the contribution they have made to the unbalance of our economy. The facts of the situation are simple enough, but they have been obscured by the high walls which propaganda has built around big business. Under this obstruction Mr. Kennedy has planted his statistical dynamite borrowed from the ample stores of the Treasury Department and the Standard Statistics Company—unimpeachable sources both. With one blast he breaches the belief that when the "size of the [business] pie increases, everybody must get a bigger slice"; with another he shatters the myth that most people have a stake in the success of big business owing to the widespread nature of stock ownership. Even during the boom of the twenties, which Mr. Kennedy prefers to call the "pre-depression era," prosperity was confined to a small group of big corporations. The striking rise in corporate incomes which took place between 1925 and 1929 was made by those companies earning net profits of $1,000,000 upward, whose share in the total jumped in that period from 65 per cent to 80 per cent. Again, in the years of the depression, the big corporations as a group managed to make profits even if they were on a reduced scale. It was the little fellows who provided the colossal deficits reported for all corporations in that period.

It is not possible in the course of a brief review to do more

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than draw attention to the impressive figures which Mr. Kennedy has produced in support of his case. Nor can more than brief mention be made of his discussion of the way in which the great corporations evade the burdens of the competitive economic philosophy under which they nominally operate. It is significant, as he points out, that the most wounding name you can call an industrial tycoon is "price-cutter." Mr. Kennedy's conclusion is discouraging. Depression, he thinks, "is our normal state" so long as the primary responsibility of the big industrialists who control the vital areas of our economy is to see that dividends get paid. He himself has no remedies to offer, with the result that his book takes on a rather negative air. One must hope that he will now apply his experience and his keen mind to the harder task of seeking a way out of the economic impasse which he has so well described. Meanwhile, this book can be heartily recommended to all conscientious citizens and particularly to those small business men who lend so much moral support to big business and get so little material aid in return.

KEITH HUTCHISON

Volunteers in Spain

MEN IN BATTLE. By Alvah Bessie. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

THE LINCOLN BATTALION. By Edwin Rolfe. Random House. $2.50.

THIS TIME A BETTER EARTH. By Ted Allen. William Morrow and Company. $2.50.

> Never before in the history of the world had there been such a body of men—a spontaneously gathered international volunteer army, drawn from every stratum of human life and every human occupation, handworkers and professionals, intellectuals and farmers. The very existence of this army was the guaranty of international working-class brotherhood, the final proof that those who perform the work of the world possess a common interest. Every occupation, every color, every nationality—these men had fought and died with and for each other; their roster was the roster of mankind.—From "Men in Battle."

OUT of his own experience as a soldier of the line Bessie has written a powerful story of the International Brigades in Spain. It is not a pleasant book to read because there is little pleasant in war; but it is an honest picture of men in battle, of heroism and cheap cowardice, of sacrifice and demoralization, of soldiers and of phonies dressed in uniform. Bessie has tried hard to tell his story plainly, and his success is shown by the characters who live on every page of the book.

Bessie went to Spain, as did most of us, "as the result of irresistible determination to take [his] place in a struggle whose front lines are not confined to Spain." He entered the trenches during Franco's drive to the Mediterranean in the spring of 1938 and served until the International Brigades were withdrawn from the lines in September of that year. He participated in retreat, reorganization, offensive, and retreat—the continuous cycle of the Loyalist campaigns. And out of it he has written the story of the people's army of Spain, an untrained "rabble" who held out against superior forces for more than thirty months. He is at his best when describing the actual battle scenes—in vivid narrative that spares the reader none of war's horrors but, because Bessie is no pacifist, brings forth the positive convictions of soldiers who knew why they fought.

Bessie paints a more authentic picture than does Edwin Rolfe in his factual history of the Lincoln Battalion. Rolfe, who served with the International Brigades for more than sixteen months and for another four acted as *Daily Worker* correspondent in Spain, has chosen to write a detailed description of the Lincolns and of the Americans who served in other Loyalist units. His accounts of battles and marches and maneuvers and his passing descriptions of more than 250 of the men lack the excitement and glamor of Bessie's book, but they give us a glimpse of many men that Bessie never knew—of Joe Dallet, a steel worker who quoted Eliot and Yeats, of Sammy Levinger, to whom living meant comradeship, of "Butch" Goldstein, who deserted from an officers' training school to return to the front lines.

Rolfe's history, too, is lacking in realism because he ignores what Bessie recognizes—that in war men become demoralized and curse their officers and hate their companions. It is no reflection upon the genuine courage of the International Brigades that their finest had feet of clay, and an adequate history must record the facts. But Rolfe has done an exceedingly workmanlike job; thirty-eight photographs and six maps of the various actions help to give us a panoramic view of the day-by-day struggle. Rolfe inexplicably ignores the men and women of the medical corps, and he has made a number of minor errors—for instance, the Fascist counter-offensive at Teruel, directed against the Thaelmann and Mac-Pap (Canadian) battalions, began on January 16, not in February. But these do not detract from the real value of "The Lincoln Battalion" as an unusually clear account of the military history of the American volunteers.

Neither Bessie nor Rolfe pays much attention to Spanish politics during the war; their occasional references to it are always faulty and partisan. Rolfe succeeds, incidentally, in telling his story without a single reference to the Soviet Union, whose officers trained the Loyalist army, whose arms enabled it to fight, and whose foreign policy forced it into suicide.

Allen's book, published a few months ago, is a slow, pedestrian account of the battles of Jarama and Brunete. Cast in novel form, it assumes the character of pure fiction as Allen's tin soldiers go forth into battle, untroubled by lice or bad manners or any other habit not characteristic of Boy Scouts.

SAMUEL ROMER

Since October

WORLD COMMUNISM. A HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. By F. Borkenau. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.75.

IN 1920 the Independent Socialists, the most important party of the German workers, were divided by an acute conflict on the question of entering the Third International. In order to win the Independents for communism, Zinoviev, the president of the Third International, came to Germany

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himself. At the party congress at Halle, Zinoviev, surrounded by the glamor of the Russian Revolution, made a speech in German that lasted four hours, a speech remembered for many years afterward. He won: the big majority of the Independents joined the Moscow International. Zinoviev, as everybody knows, was shot as a traitor by the present Russian government.

In 1925 and 1926 the Communist International made a very energetic move to defeat the so-called ultra-left and ultra-radical tendency within its own ranks. During these years the star of Zinoviev was descending; now Bukharin, the famous theoretical thinker of communism, was the real leader of the International. In speeches, articles, and pamphlets he attacked the devil of ultra-radicalism; with biting irony he unmasked the mistakes of the opposite tendency. Bukharin won, smiling, full of jokes, and full of desire for revenge. A short time ago Bukharin, as again everybody knows, became the famous prisoner in one of the sensational Moscow trials. His irony was now broken, but his sharp art of disputation could not be daunted by the power of the prosecutor. Bukharin was shot as a traitor.

The history of the Communist International is important as history; it is full of dramatic turns, of the rise and fall of persons and theories. Borkenau describes events and personalities in a plastic manner and gives the reader a vivid realization of the great changes which have taken place in Moscow and within all the Communist parties since 1919. The friends and members of the official Communist parties will disagree with Borkenau at nearly every point, but it will be difficult for them to challenge the quality of his research or the sincerity of his conclusions.

The reader who studies Borkenau's book will find that the tactic and theory of the Communist International jump every few years from one extreme to another. The defenders of the Communist International could answer that the objective facts of history and politics are always changing, and therefore the party of the workers is also compelled to change its tactics under new conditions. But Borkenau proves that the sudden changes in Communist tactics have mostly occurred without any regard for the objective conditions of the international labor class, and have been the result of corresponding changes within the dominating party of Russia. For instance, the Communist parties follow for a few years the method of a United Front with the democratic parties. Many sincere workers and intellectuals who favor a moderate political method are attracted. Then suddenly Moscow commands the end of the United Front, and the Communist parties return to radicalism. The sincere friends of the United Front either leave the Communist Party or are expelled. Now comes a new period of official Communist radicalism, till the day that Moscow makes the next turn, when sincere radicals are ejected from the International. The only people within the Communist leadership who survive all the changes and purges are the indifferent bureaucrats, who are always ready to accept the thesis of Moscow.

As the news of the Russian-German treaty arrived, everybody felt the Communist tactic of the United Front had become impossible. And now the official theory of the Third International has made a corresponding change, has suddenly discovered that all the capitalist governments on earth are equally bad, that the real revolutionist must fight them all with the same vigor, and if the revolutionary Soviet state is compelled to make a compromise with bourgeois countries, it makes no difference whether the compromise is made with fascism or with democracy. But the moral foundations of the Communist International are shattered so badly that the year 1939 will probably sound the death knell of the Third International just as 1914 marked the end of the Second.

There are two deficiencies in Borkenau's book. While it gives a vivid and careful description of the Communist parties outside Russia, its description of the Russian Communist Party is too short, for the Russian party has always been the center and the driving force of world communism. Secondly, Borkenau shows some strange misunderstandings of Karl Marx and the Marxian theory. He writes: "The Communists hunted a phantom which deceived them continually—the vain phantom of social revolution such as Marx had seen it." Borkenau should know that Marxism is nothing but a certain critical method of approach to social problems; it does not require belief in any dogma. Marx was always very careful to avoid prophecies on the political future. If the Communist International hunted certain phantoms, they were not the phantoms of Marxism.

Borkenau's book should be read by everybody who wants to have the facts about communism rather than empty gossip. And reactionaries might learn from Borkenau that world communism is not so dangerous as they believe or try to make others believe.

ARTHUR ROSENBERG

WAR

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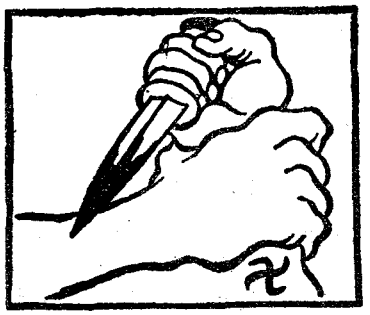

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DRAMA

When Men Were Men

"LIFE WITH FATHER" (Empire Theater) is a delightful affair and well calculated to please equally those who do and those who do not know the various reminiscences by Clarence Day upon which it is founded. Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay, who put it together, have done something considerably more difficult than merely to select and give continuity—they have almost miraculously preserved a flavor which might have been expected to defy translation into another form.

Father was a fine flower of Victorian manhood, and in those days virility didn't mean what D. H. Lawrence means by the word. Manliness was something whose outward expressions were big cigars and high blood pressure, a hearty contempt for women's notions and the sure conviction (wrong of course, since some things are eternal) that *pater familias* was master in his own house. It was also likely to mean, as it certainly did in the case of the elder Day, an egocentric view of the universe so naive that the Master was never able to understand why everyone else should not be as anxious for him to have his own way as he was himself.

Considered merely as a case history, Father was an obtuse bully; but Father was loved by his wife and remembered with enormous affection by the son who celebrated both his rages and all those final decisions which mother so quietly revised. The triumph of the play, like the triumph of the sketches upon which it is based, lies in the fact that it makes the paradox understandable, not by explaining it in any rational terms, but by communicating something which portraiture can communicate and case histories cannot. Merely to say that Father meant well would be to add insult to injury; but Father did mean well, and we forgive him as a living person what we could not possibly forgive him as an abstraction. Something is perhaps explained by the fact that in that household which lived in perpetual crisis there were rages and the joy of battle but no rancor and no cruelty, something more perhaps by the fact that Father protected the family against God as well as against anyone else who threatened it, and would no more permit the minister to pray for mother as "a miserable sinner" when God knew as well as everybody else that she was a good woman than he would consent to the assumption that "a mere technicality" like his own failure to get himself baptized would keep him out of heaven. But no catalogue of details will really explain the mystery. The family formed a *Gestalt* which meant something other than the sum of its parts, and it is the *Gestalt* which the play captures.

"The celebrated malice of the distinguished Miss Clare Boothe is just the thing we have needed to supply us with a good anti-Nazi melodrama."—*Richard Watts, Herald Tribune.*
CLARE BOOTHE'S HIT! **MARGIN FOR ERROR**
Bert Lytell, Elspeth Eric, Sam Levene, Leif Erickson, Bramwell Fletcher, Philip Coolidge | Directed by OTTO L. PREMINGER
PLYMOUTH THEATRE WEST 45th STREET. Evenings 8:45. Matinees: Wednesday and Saturday 2:45

"Life with Father" is enormously funny, but the fun is not based on condescension, and it is sly as often as it is fantastic. There is the highest of high comedy in scenes like that in which Father explains that the reason men so often lose arguments with women is because the subject always gets changed when the man isn't looking and the argument comes somehow to turn, not upon the original question, but upon a new one, namely, whether the man really loves his opponent or not. If the play took its place instantaneously among the biggest of big hits, that is in part because it is certain to please both members of those heterosexual couples which make up the bulk of an audience. While one says to himself, "How like a woman," the other will be saying, "How like a man." And there is no reason why either should tell what he is laughing at.

There are admirable performances by Howard Lindsay and Dorothy Stickney.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

ART

FOR some time now the Whitney Museum has exerted its influence on the contemporary American scene. It has offered our artists encouragement, the advantages of various group shows, and the hospitality of its permanent collection. The Museum's Juliana Force, too, played an instrumental part in the first Federal Art Project, which, economically and perhaps frivolously speaking, marked the inception of the (brief) Golden Age of American culture. It is consequently difficult for the reviewer—particularly for this reviewer, who on a previous occasion has been taken to task for failing to accept the artist's professional and social maladjustments as inevitably responsible for the technical deficiencies of his work—to evaluate the present Whitney show.

From a social point of view the museum has accomplished its purpose admirably; it has, in fact, become an institution, a de luxe kind of orphan asylum for the "abandoned" American artist. On the other hand, in a functional sense, viewed simply as a gallery depersonalized of school and motive and considered in terms of what is exhibited, it brings other, less genial judgments to mind. The problem arises, therefore: which is the more significant aspect of the museum—its personal relationship to the artist or its functional relationship to the public? Also is it fair to disparage work which has been encouraged and collected with the best intentions? The answer in this specific case at any rate may be found in the title of the current exhibition: "Twentieth-Century Artists." It will be noted that the popular qualifying term "American" has been omitted. Here, then, are 280-odd oils, water colors, prints, drawings, and pieces of sculpture, presented not like the handicraft of a Pueblo reservation under some local humanitarian aegis, but offered as part of the aesthetic product of twentieth-century consciousness. The work, it follows, may be judged by fairly generalized standards. And it may be compared qualitatively with other work of the era without further reference to the museum's particular avuncular personality or to the artist's particular struggle in his native milieu. The latter, if the artist's affirmation is unified and

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complete, will in some way be translated into the terms of his medium. It may be added parenthetically that there seems to be an extensive and fallacious theory, if not a school, of "Daniel Boone-ism" in American art, apparently based on the assumption that spiritually we are a backwoods nation, that our artists are pioneers caught in the underbrush of some indigenous banality, and that consequently a categorical inferiority in our creative work must be accepted, overlooked, or, more often, praised. The artist, following this argument, becomes as smug as a conspirator, while his audience must suspend all objective values and share the secret.

Too many examples of this automatic deception are in the Whitney show, paintings which represent attitudes rather than reactions, creative work which is a substitute for and not a criticism of reality. A still-life and a brick silo have little value on canvas unless they describe, beyond their relationship to paint methods, a relationship to the human eye. The interpretative process for the graphic artist should be the means of endowing an apple or a wall with the quality of human experience; in the same way a successful abstraction becomes something more than an arbitrary arrangement or pattern. When this experiential amplification is lacking, the picture holds little meaning for the observer beyond the topical considerations of time and place. That no doubt is responsible for the enforced emphasis on regionalism, local "schools," "movements," and criteria in shows like the present one (despite the conspicuous omission in title) in which the factor of interpretation is either ignored or reduced to its most mimetic and manneristic functions. The paintings in "Twentieth-Century Artists" may for the most part be divided into three groups: the obviously derivative, in which the artist reacts not to reality but to an established and published approach—Speicher, Blanche, Peter Blume, Paul Burlin, Jared French, Arshile Gorky, Walt Kuhn, Marguerite Zorach; the empiricists, numbering such talents as Sheeler, Jo Jones, Lucioni, who are primarily concerned with negating the element of personal consciousness and consequently produce inferior "objects," chairs which cannot be sat upon and inedible fruit; and the journalists—Benton, Aaron Bohrod, John Steuart Curry, Ernest Fiene, Leon Kroll, Kenneth Miller, Raphael Soyer, Maurice Sterne—all of whom demonstrate facility and control in making observations which are in no sense inevitable to the chosen medium. Finally there is the group, if such it can be called, of craftsmen who have transcended social and technical clichés and have devoted themselves to the generic problems of statement and communication—Luks, Kuniyoshi, Henry Mattson, Marin, and Weber.

A further proof of the futility in organized attempts at producing "national" art may be found in the retrospective Marin show at Stieglitz's. Marin, who belongs to no school and who as an "eclectic" has been left out in the cold by the more recent "movements," succeeds where the others have failed. His series of papers possess all the violence, energy, and hysteria of the American scene objectivized in an original idiom and achieved in a form as individual and universal as the human organism itself. Marin's method is poetic in its essentials; condensation, symbolism, the evocation of mood, all contribute to his statement. The origins of this approach and its tentative experiments may be traced from his earliest work. London Omnibus, executed in the same year

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HENRY MILLER

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(1908) as the conventional Old Houses, Chartres, already presents clues to the artist's later, more assured style. Surfaces are broken up into precise areas of color; movement is attempted not according to traditional linear arrangements or perspectives but in terms of stenographic color relationships. In The Old Salt experimentation assumes the proportions and direction of affirmation. The artist must reproduce and fix on paper the eye's most spontaneous impression of a scene, inclose it in a socket-like composition. Thereafter, from Movement Pertaining to Deer Isle (1927) to Off Cape Split (1937), Marin presents his complete and singular expressions, work whose purpose is explicit and whose talent, despite trends, will always have its way.

CHRISTOPHER LAZARE

MUSIC

IN EXPLANATION of my contention that Toscanini nowadays conducts but is not heard I pointed out that the performance he produces with fanatical zeal for exactly the right sonorities and right plastic proportions reaches the ears of the radio audience with those sonorities and proportions altered by the acoustic defects of Studio 8H, by the limitations in frequency and volume range of transmitting apparatus, by the deficiencies of most of the radio sets in American homes. I forgot to add that with the sonorities produced with such care by Toscanini there emerges from the radio—even from the finest Scott—a whistle caused by interference from another station. And I will add now that from many radios the performance emerges combined with the program of the Mutual Broadcasting System—the first movement of the recent performance of Beethoven's "Eroica," for example, with jazz; the second movement with Trans-Radio news. And this is to say nothing of the disturbances added by the master aerials, most of them defective, that are being installed in apartment houses.

All this is interesting because American broadcasting companies are loud about the benefits the American radio audience receives from the American system of commercial broadcasting; and these claims may be questioned. N. B. C., for example, has much to say about the symphony orchestra it established for broadcasting in 1937, about its engagement of Toscanini, and about these as the "climax to its presentation of the best in music for eleven years" (to quote from the brochure published to celebrate the occasion). But as far back as 1928 I heard in London the fine symphony orchestra established by the non-commercial British Broadcasting Corporation; and this orchestra's public and broadcast concerts each week under conductors who later included Koussevitzky and Toscanini were part of a program which assured the English radio audience an average of two hours of the best music every evening. This was at a time, which continued as late as 1930-31, when N. B. C. was occasionally picking up —and dropping—concerts by one or another of the American orchestras; when the Philadelphia Orchestra might be heard in a few special broadcasts but N. B. C.'s week-in, week-out orchestral offerings were typified by the Saturday night General Electric Hour in which Walter Damrosch conducted programs of things like Delibes's "Sylvia," Massenet's "Elegy," Grainger's "Molly on the Shore," Handel's Largo, Rubinstein's "Melody in F," Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," with an occasional movement or two of a symphony; when N. B. C. offered no programs of Carnegie or Town Hall caliber at all on week-day nights, and its total for the week might be two hours. (The Metropolitan Opera broadcasts began in 1931-32.)

If, then, N. B. C., out of regard for the commercial value of Toscanini's celebrated name, established an orchestra for radio in 1937, it did what the B. B. C., out of regard for great music, did ten years earlier; if American commercial broadcasting gave the American radio audience Toscanini's performances in 1937, it gave this audience Damrosch's General Electric Hour before that (in 1927 it was Damrosch whose name was sufficiently celebrated for Mr. Sarnoff to acquire it as a commercial asset and to consider Damrosch a great conductor); and American commercial broadcasting gives this audience Toscanini's performances mixed with a whistle, jazz, and Trans-Radio news. For these interferences are caused by stations on adjacent wave lengths that broadcast with too great power; they use that much power to cover more territory; and they cover more territory to be able to charge advertisers more for time. I am fully aware that the B. B. C.'s broadcasts also suffer from interference; but I am pointing out a particular interference that results from the commercialization of broadcasting in this country.

The opening concerts of the New Friends of Music have fulfilled my predictions. Concert programs repeat a limited repertory; but an organization that sets out merely to play what is unplayed will give its audience a few neglected masterpieces like the Viola Quintet K. 614 of Mozart of the second Friends concert, but a greater number of works that deserve their obscurity, like the Horn Quintet K. 407 of the first concert, the Duo K. 423 for violin and viola of the second. And there has been the usual inequality in performances: the players of the Duo were quite undistinguished; but what made the Viola Quintet an unforgettable experience was the way it was played by the new Primrose Quartet and William Carboni—with the combination of technical mastery, emotional warmth, and distinction of musical style all raised to sheer incandescence that has been heard until now only from the Budapest Quartet.

The Divertimento K. 334 of Mozart for strings and two horns recorded for Columbia by the Lener Quartet and Aubrey and Dennis Brain (M-379, $7.50) is the one recorded a few years ago by Harty with the London Philharmonic. The Leners include two dull movements which Harty wisely omitted; and they make things worse with a performance as stodgy as Harty's was light-footed; but the older recording sounds shabby. Ernst Victor Wolff and Janos Scholz have recorded a good performance of Bach's Sonata No. 3 for harpsichord and viola da gamba (X-147, $3.50), which I find more attractive than the other two sonatas of the group, but not one of Bach's most consequential works. And Barlow and the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony have done another of their better jobs wih Goldmark's melodious "Rustic Wedding" Symphony (M-385, $7.50). The rest next time.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Turkey's Changed Role

Dear Sirs: It must be quite an amazing experience for students of the old Eastern question to observe the developments of the present Turkish foreign policy. For a century Turkey represented just so much potential booty to be divided. Its shaky existence and its opportunist policies, the attempts to render its survival impossible and to bolster it up, constituted major elements of instability in Europe for several generations. Now we find a new Turkey in the role of a factor of stability, a champion of peace and security, and an advocate of respect for commitments.

The general public is at a loss to undertand Turkey's changed role because it has not been able to follow local developments there. It has tried to interpret changes in Turkey in terms of general post-war developments in the direction of dictatorship. This interpretation hardly corresponded to facts, because the new Turkey has sincerely liquidated a militaristic past and has always been a champion of peace and non-aggression. In internal affairs it has used persuasion rather than dictation and has made gradual progress toward democracy. Furthermore, it passed an acid test at the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk by avoiding any overturn and achieving perfect continuity in a national, rather than personal, sense.

The imperial burden left from past centuries was for pre-war Turkey a tremendous liability. All its energies were spent to keep together Yemen, Arabia, Transjordan, Palestine, Irak, Tripoli, Albania, and the rest. There was no return for the constant sacrifice of millions of sons of the Turkish homeland and of all available assets for the good of places outside the homeland. When we got rid of the burden of policing all these countries, we could progress and prosper and conquer a respectable place in the world. Anybody today in Turkey who hinted that we should seek new imperial burdens would be classed as mad. The consequence is that Turkey cannot be bribed or lured into complicity with any aggressor.

On the contrary, Turkey has concluded pacts of friendship or alliance with all its neighbors in order to defend jointly their independence against masked or unmasked aggressors. Both the Balkan League, with Greece, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, and the Saadabad pact, with Persia, Afghanistan, and Irak, are bound to develop, given normal conditions, into federations based on equal rights for all members. This region, once a classical area of strife, has really the best chance to become one day the starting-point of a world federation.

The dissolution of the old empire and the formation of a national state out of new elements who have proved to be capable of sacrificing everything in order to build an entirely new order have made it possible to establish the public-spirited leadership of comparatively young men, such as few countries can boast. The late Ataturk often said, "Other people may like to raise flowers. I take delight in raising public-spirited men. The amateur who raises flowers does not expect any gratitude from his flowers; neither do I."

What will actually be saved for humanity by Turkey's firm stand cannot be foretold. It is possible that its determination to save the peace and to localize the war may prepare for a new order of things based on respect for the rights and commitments of others.

A. E. YALMAN

New York, November 6

On "Truth in Accounting"

Dear Sirs: The views expressed by Kenneth MacNeal in the two articles which appeared in your issue of October 7 and 14, are apparently widely at variance with those held by the Securities and Exchange Commission and by leading teachers of accounting, as well as with those of practicing accountants.

Mr. MacNeal makes one statement which is erroneous and may be seriously misleading. He says that on April 7, 1934, the Federal Trade Commission announced that its original regulation had been amended and that "the accounting profession thereupon changed its form of unqualified certificate . . . from one which states that its financial statements are true, to a form of certificate which merely states that such financial statements *fairly present, in accordance with accepted principles of accounting,* the position of a company." (Italics Mr. MacNeal's.)

The easily ascertainable facts are that such a change in the form of certificate was first recommended in a report of a committee of the American Institute of Accountants to the New York Stock Exchange dated September 22, 1932, before the Administration which passed the Securities Act was elected; that the New York Stock Exchange on October 25, 1933, recommended that the change should be made; and that the new form of certificate, embodying the words to which Mr. MacNeal takes exception, was approved by the New York Stock Exchange, the Controllers' Institute, and the American Institute of Accountants, and was made public in January, 1934. The imputation that the change of certificate was inspired by the change of law is refuted by the dates.

JOHN L. CAREY, Secretary,
American Institute of Accountants

New York, November 1

Dear Sirs: Kenneth MacNeal's article "What's Wrong With Accounting?" in the October 7 and October 14 issues of *The Nation* makes interesting reading. Mr. MacNeal has some good points to make, especially when he takes accountants to task for certifying balance sheets in which the stockholders' equity is in reality understated because, on grounds of conservatism, fixed assets have been written down to a nominal value or secret reserves have otherwise been created. However, most students of accounting cannot but regret that you saw fit to publish the article. Appearing in a technical journal, it would have been thought-provoking and probably served to stimulate discussion. Addressed to the layman through a medium such as *The Nation,* it is almost certain to mislead the public as to the nature of accounting and the functions of public accountants. In the first place, Mr. MacNeal would indict the entire profession because there have been instances in which accountants have certified statements later used to mulct stockholders, present or prospective. Because of this the accountant is characterized as "a sort of accessory in a confidence game." Is it not possible that such sensationalism may help to explain why the article was "killed by the editors" of another magazine before you accepted it?

Mr. MacNeal's illustrations are oversimplified, and as a result his conclusions are too broad. For example, there

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is the illustration of the two business men who each held at the end of the year 1,000 shares of the same stock. One, however, purchased his on December 31 with the proceeds from the sale of shares of another stock. Both had invested the same amount in two different stocks on January 1. The two investors, of course, occupy the same market position on December 31, and Mr. MacNeal rightly points out that a decline in the price of the stock held in the same amount by each, which would wipe out the unrealized profit of the one investor, would also wipe out the realized profit of the other (if, it might be added, it became necessary to sell). He concludes that "in fact, there is no difference whatever between them," and chides the accountants, who "insist that the realized profit is a profit and that the unrealized profit is not a profit." Mr. MacNeal was apparently neither one of those who, in 1932, held the same stocks they bought in 1928 nor one of those who sold their stocks in 1929 and spent the proceeds or acquired some other investment than stocks. These people know the difference between a realized and an unrealized profit. Mr. MacNeal would have done better simply to call attention to the desirability of having the balance sheet carry some indication of the value of a concern's outside investments.

Mr. MacNeal's panacea, namely, the stating of all assets at appraised or market values regardless of their nature or the purposes for which they are held is nothing new. "Market value" vs. "original cost" as a basis of asset valuation has been debated for many years by accountants, both practitioners and teachers. It may safely be said that at present there is diminishing support for the "market value" concept, especially as applied to the plant of an industrial corporation.

Aside from the impracticability of attempting to revalue annually the vast array of buildings, machinery, and equipment which constitute the plant of the typical industrial corporation, little benefit could be derived from periodic revaluations of assets which are not held for sale and could not be sold apart from the business.

It may be noted that a number of our large corporations have, within the last dozen years, both written up and written down their plant assets to approximate market values above or below historical cost, presumably in accordance with the method of asset valuation recommended by Mr. MacNeal. The most tangible result has been that these corporations have, through depreciation charges based on such inflated or deflated "values," reported lower profits in good times and higher profits in bad times than would have been the case had they retained "original cost" on the books. That such a result is in the interest of investors is not proved, and there are strong objections to it from the standpoint of correct income reporting.

M. B. DANIELS

Washington, D. C., November 3

Mr. MacNeal Replies

Dear Sirs: In regard to Mr. Carey's protest, far be it from me to impugn the inspirations or motives of accounting leaders. I shall leave that to God and the psychiatrists. But it seems to me that the facts remain as stated. Prior to 1933 the accounting profession generally certified financial statements as *correct.* After April 7, 1934, it certified that they *truly and fairly reflect the application of accepted accounting principles to the facts disclosed.* A year or so later it began to certify that they *fairly present, in accordance with accepted principles of accounting,* the position of a company. Let Mr. Carey explain the subjective motivations involved, if he can and will. It still seems apparent that accounting principles and truth do not make good bedfellows.

In reply to Mr. Daniels, I wish that he would say wherein the financial positions of the two owners of 1,000 shares of International Harvester, as I described them, differ. To me it seems elementary that *there is no difference whatever between an unrealized profit and a reinvested realized profit.* If I am wrong in this, then so is virtually every accountant with whom I have discussed it during the past several years.

KENNETH MACNEAL

Philadelphia, November 8

Press "Freedom," 1840 Style

Dear Sirs: In your issue of November 4, Max Lerner makes some interesting and timely observations about the American press. I should like to raise one question —from the historical point of view.

Mr. Lerner speaks of the "free small newspapers" of Jefferson's day, and contrasts our contemporary "mastodons." I have not seen any of the papers of that time, but I have seen more than one hundred of the papers published a generation later, in Jackson's day. They were still small, but they certainly were not free. The policies followed were those of definite political parties—and it was all very frankly done. Journalistic "freedom" in the sense in which Mr. Lerner appears to use it was already a strange animal in the 1830's.

Furthermore, "boiler-plate" is nothing new. Back-country papers reprinted their national and metropolitan news from the great dailies of New York, Boston, and Albany. One might see over a story, "From the *Journal of Commerce,*" instead of "AP." The control of the channels of communication was essentially the same as it is now. The lords of the press have grown more powerful and more subtle, of course, but they were no weaklings a century ago.

SIDNEY L. JACKSON

Mt. Vernon, N. Y., November 7

CONTRIBUTORS

HERBERT HARRIS, author of "American Labor," is at work on a book dealing with current labor problems.

LOUIS FISCHER, *The Nation's* European correspondent, has just left Italy after making a first-hand study of conditions there.

T. E. WOOD is the pseudonym of a Canadian journalist.

FRANZ HOELLERING, a native of Vienna, was for many years editor of the *Berliner Zeitung.* He is now living in this country.

SAMUEL ROMER fought with the International Brigade in Spain.

ARTHUR ROSENBERG, author of the "History of Bolshevism" and formerly a professor at the University of Berlin, is now teaching at Brooklyn College.

CORRECTION. A radio dispatch from Louis Fischer printed in the issue of September 23 contained the sentence: "Nothing remains of the traditional Soviet foreign policy." Through an error of transcription the qualifying word "foreign" was omitted from the sentence as printed.—EDITORS THE NATION.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

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